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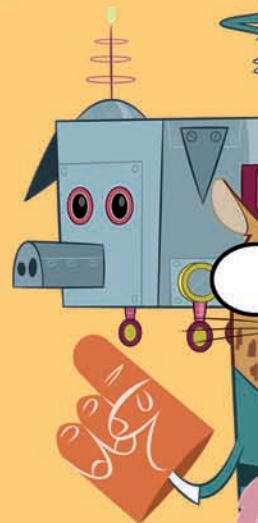
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Contacts :

Eric Garnet : eric.garnet@go-n.fr

Anne De Galard : anne.degalard@go-n.fr



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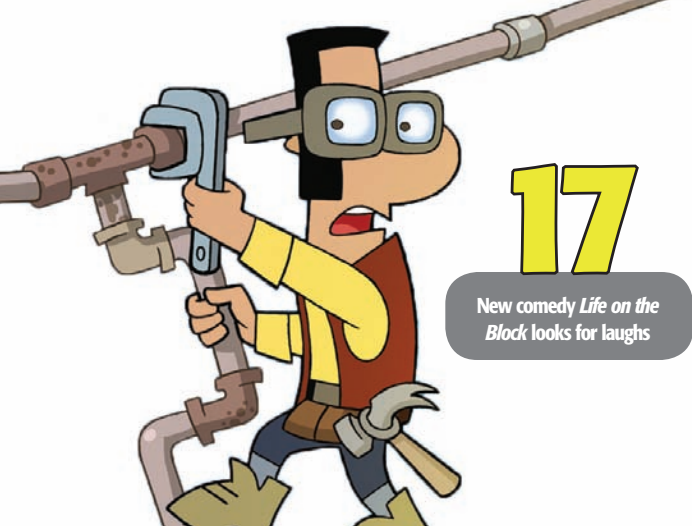


CARTOON NETWORK

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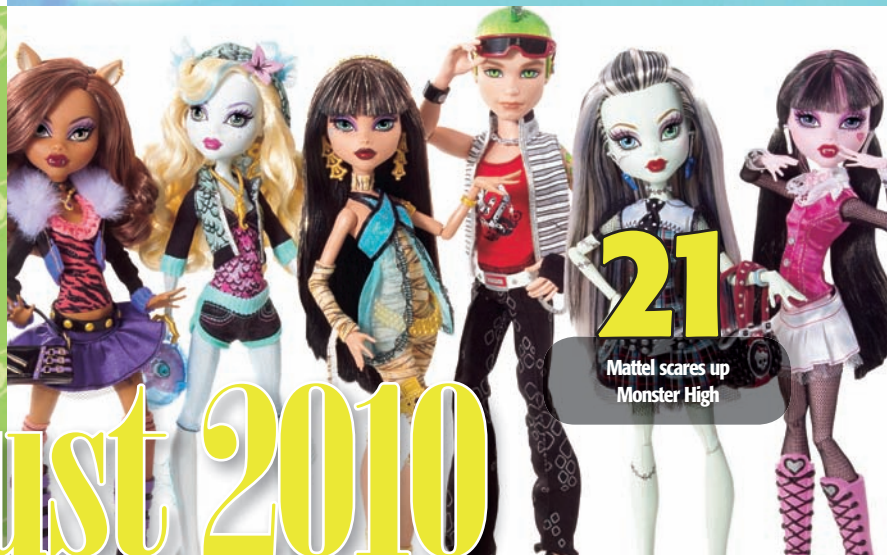
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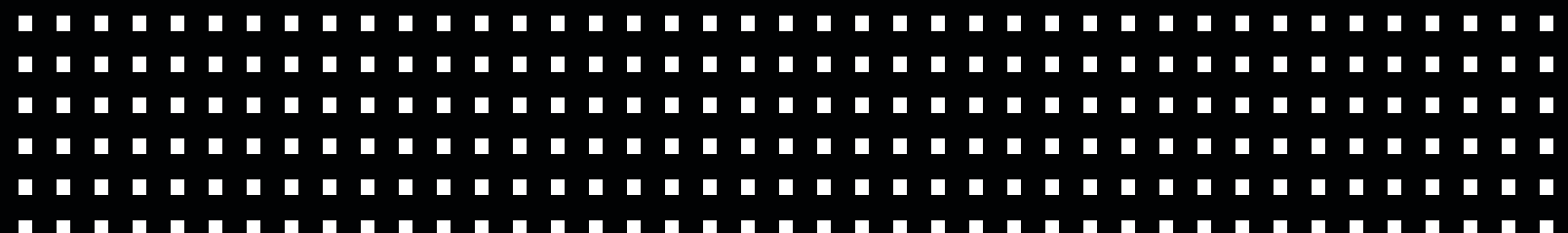
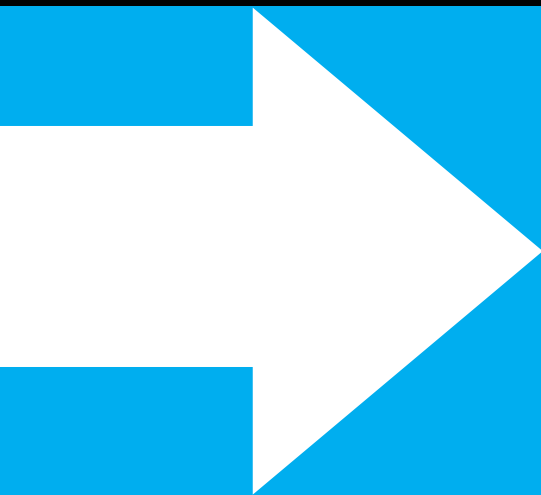
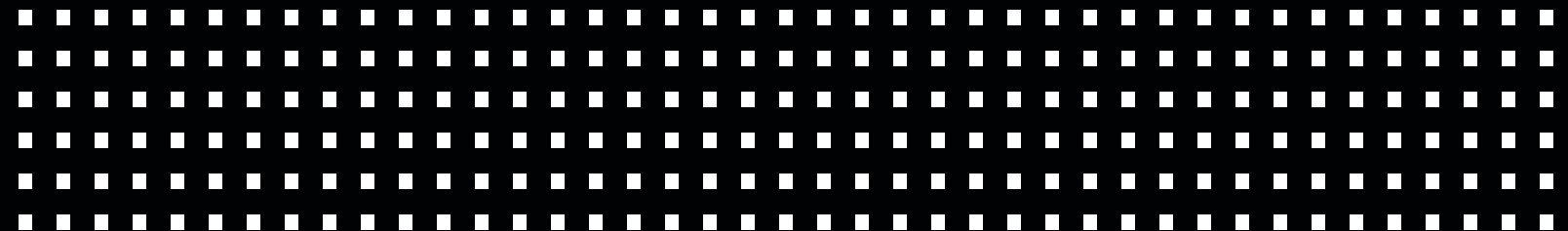
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Cover Our editorial cover sports an image from new video game *Kinectimals*, designed for Microsoft's Kinect, while International copies feature an ad for upcoming 2-D series *YooHoo & Friends* from Toonzoo Studios and Animation Development Company.

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A GAME SHORT AND A DAY LATE

Last year, it finally happened. After registering healthy, if not meteoric growth since its inception, the video game industry experienced a drop in year-over-year sales. Certainly the worldwide economic crisis played a role in the downturn, not to mention the onset of a more virulent strain of piracy driven by increased digital software distribution. However, I can't help but wonder if it also had something to do with the maturation of the core-gamer demo.

The key male 18 to 34 group isn't growing by leaps and bounds and even with the advent of the Nintendo Wii in 2006, most major console hardware and software manufacturers continue to put the bulk of their time and effort into courting this crowd. This isn't a sustainable practice. Growth now has to come from wooing consumers residing in other demos, and if this year's crop of E3 innovations is any indication, major console manufacturers seem to be cottoning onto the idea.

As our senior writer Wendy Goldman Getzler so ably points out in this month's feature "A Family Affair" (page 30), it's clear that the industry is looking at kids, families and casual gamers as its big hope for expansion. Microsoft and Sony are now chasing the market carved out by Nintendo, first with its tween must-have device the DS and then followed by the Wii. In fact, both Microsoft's Kinect and Sony's Move Controller are venturing into Wii territory, making game play as easy as jumping up and down—literally in Microsoft's case. (Kinect registers body and facial movements on-screen without the aid of a physical controller.) Additionally, a lot of the software titles being built for these new console technologies are chock-full of mini-games and bite-sized experiences, if you will, intended to last no longer than 10 or 15 minutes. In other words, they're making content perfect for younger kids and/or a rousing rendition of family game night.

A lot of this new tech is truly astounding, but could Microsoft and Sony be too late to the party? A good portion of families already own the Wii and aren't likely to chuck it as long as developers keep innovating content for the platform the way that Warner Bros. Interactive has, for example, with the first-ever Sesame Street Wii games designed for preschoolers. Moreover, kids and their casual-game-playing moms, in particular, have already started turning to Apple platforms like the iPhone and iPad to get their kicks. With new apps being published daily that retail for just a few bucks each, and networks making the transition to 4G in North America over the next few years, where kids are likely to inherit old iPhones as their parents upgrade, console platforms vying for family dollars are going to have some stiff competition.

Cheers,
Lana

VP & PUBLISHER

Jocelyn Christie (jchristie@brunico.com)

EDITORIAL

Lana Castleman Editor (lancastleman@brunico.com)

Kate Calder Senior Writer (kcalder@brunico.com)

Gary Rusak Senior Writer (grusak@brunico.com)

Wendy Golman Getzler Senior Online Writer (wgolman@brunico.com)

Writers and Contributors Nickelodeon Kids & Family (New York)

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND ADVERTISING SALES (416) 408-2300, 1-800-KID-4512

Myles Hobbs Associate Publisher (mhobbs@brunico.com)

Kristina Ejem Account Manager (kejem@brunico.com)

Ian Lambur Account Manager (ilambur@brunico.com)

Lauren Talledo Business Development Executive,
KidScreen Connect (ltalledo@brunico.com)

CORPORATE

President & CEO **Russell Goldstein** (rgoldstein@brunico.com)

VP & Editorial Director **Mary Maddever** (mmaddever@brunico.com)

VP of Finance & Administration **Linda Lovegrove** (llovegrove@brunico.com)

VP & Chief Information Officer **Omri Tintpulver** (otintpulver@brunico.com)

BRUNICO CREATIVE

Creative Director **Stephen Stanley** (sstanley@brunico.com)

Art Director **Andrew Glowala** (aglowala@brunico.com)

Production/Distribution Coordinator **Robert Lines** (rlines@brunico.com)

BRUNICO AUDIENCE SERVICES

Senior Manager, Audience Services **Jennifer Colvin** (jcolvin@brunico.com)

Assistant Audience Services Manager **Christine McNalley** (cmcnalley@brunico.com)

Customer care

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please contact us by e-mail: kidScreenCustomercare@brunico.com

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KIDSCREEN OUT & ABOUT

ON THE INDUSTRY TRAIL...

We're having a sweltering hot summer in Toronto this year, so you'd think that we'd be planning to escape to cooler climes through work travel. Not so, unfortunately!

I've just returned from Shanghai and environs, where it was 45° in the shade and as humid as a hot shower. I had a great time attending my first-ever China Animation Market (CAM) in the sprawling industrial park city of Suzhou, where I saw a lot of exciting 2-D and CGI work from Chinese studios and got to visit Hong Ying's busy Hong Yang shop.



Without exception, the companies I met seemed very determined to explore creative partnerships with international producers and do more business beyond their own borders this year. To help make the connection, KidScreen will be showcasing some of these regional leaders with a "Made in China" sponsored supplement in our January 2011 issue.

CAM's organizers at XMediaLab also recruited a great group of international market experts to share their Western expertise, so I had a ton of fun hanging out with old friends including Tatiana Kober (Bejuba), Frank Dietz (Super RTL), Sarah Muller (CBBC), Tim Brooke-Hunt (ABC Australia), Matt Wexler (Spin Master), Waheed Alli (Chorion), Heather Kenyon (Starz) and Steven DeNure (Decode).

Myles, Lana, Kristina and Gary caught up with folks in the consumer products sector at Licensing Show in Vegas a month ago. Exhibitors were more upbeat, and there were new IP concepts generating interest on the floor, indicating a shift away from the extreme risk-aversity that's gripped the industry for the last 12 to 18 months. The social scene was also a lot more active, one highlight of which was the BBC Worldwide fête for In the Night Garden that saw the Four Seasons Fountain Terrace magically transformed into the preschool series' bizarre pastoral landscape.



NEXT STOPS

Gary and Lana are about to head out on the road, destined for two very different events focused on discovering new properties. Gary's bound for Korea, where he'll take in a double-header at the Seoul Character Fair and SPP: Seoul Cartoon and Animation Market. Lana, meanwhile, is gearing up to hobnob with the fanboys at ComicCon in San Diego.

August is when we lay low to get our biggest issues of the year done, but then we'll be back in globe-trotting action come September, with Myles and Kate hitting Cartoon Forum in Hungary, Kristina and Lana making a stop at Brand Licensing in London, and then a big KidScreen team dropping into Cannes for MIP Junior and MIPCOM.

See you somewhere soon, and be well in the meantime!

UPCOMING ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

@!&#—Now What? KidScreen's Focus on Production Services

We're remodeling our last issue of year to take an in-depth look at the myriad production services that underpin the global kids television industry. This special publication will break down into sections that explore the latest developments, trends and business models at work in broad service categories of Production, Post-Production, Audio, Talent, Interactive and Distribution.

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Marvel Animation head Eric Rollman has exited the division, which now sits under the company's new TV umbrella

by kate calder

MARVEL SHAKES UP TV BIZ, TARGETS LIVE-ACTION REALM

After spending the past few years putting together a strong animation slate, Marvel Entertainment is delving further into the TV market with the creation of Marvel Television. Animation that caters to its core-boys audience will continue as a focus for the new unit, especially with its Disney XD connection, but veteran producer and writer Jeph Loeb has been tapped as EVP to lead the charge.

Just a few weeks into his appointment, Loeb is busy sorting through Marvel's vast catalogue of more than 5,000 characters to see which ones, besides the heavy hitters like Spider-Man, will get to take a turn in the TV spotlight. He's also overseeing the development and distribution of live-action, animated and direct-to-DVD series.

Loeb says Marvel has been talking about moving into live-action television for quite a while. "The situation then presented itself with Marvel becoming part of the Disney family, which gave us immediate access to ABC Studios and ABC Family Studios," he says.

In his new role, Loeb's first priority is to look after animated projects already in production, including *The Super Hero Squad Show* (Cartoon Network), *The Avengers: Earth's Mightiest Heroes* (premiering this fall on Disney XD), *Ultimate Spider-Man* (set to bow on Disney XD in fall 2011) and a handful of co-productions still in development. As such Marvel Animation now operates under the Marvel Television umbrella and Loeb assures that he'll be very hands-on in its operation. Eric Rollman, who used to lead the toon unit, has since parted ways with Marvel.

The newest and most challenging aspect of the job for Loeb will be bringing Marvel characters into the realm of live-action

TV. "Our goal right now is to be very careful and select the right property and right character," he says.

It's too soon to say whether Loeb and his team will be working with third-party producers to co-produce new series—the first project has yet to be selected. The TV division is planning to follow the lead of Marvel's motion picture arm, which Loeb explains didn't rush into filmmaking, but instead carefully selected projects, ramping up slowly. Working closely with ABC and ABC Family will give the division a step up in terms of developing what's best for the networks in the Disney family.

For his part, Loeb brings an extensive repertoire of superhero experience. He's no stranger to comic books. In fact, he's penned stories featuring the likes of Marvel staples Iron Man, Spider-Man and the X-men. Loeb has also served as a writer and producer on long-running Warner Bros. TV series *Smallville*, worked as a writer and co-executive producer on NBC's *Heroes*, and helped write several feature films, including 1980s flicks *Commando* and *Teen Wolf*.

"My experience has always been on both sides of the creative element, not only writing the material but also understanding how to bring it through production," notes Loeb.

Reporting to Dan Buckley, publisher and president of the print, animation and digital divisions of Marvel Worldwide, Loeb says he will be working closely with the publishing arm as well as the feature film division, Marvel Studios. "The television department, the feature department and the publishing department are all doing what's best for the characters and have a unified vision as to what they think that is," he says. **N**

LINKS

Marvel >

www.marvel.com

PBS and Henson pioneer Geochaching for preschoolers

In just over a decade, Geocaching, a game of high-tech hide-and-seek, has gone from a little-known niche hobby to a mainstream activity. In fact, more than one million estimated searches take place somewhere on the planet at any given time.

Players use their Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers to both hide and seek out containers (commonly called caches) anywhere around the globe. The caches are usually small waterproof boxes that contain a log-book, and the game's most enthusiastic participants have been adults. But thanks to US pubcaster PBS and The Jim Henson Company, that may be about to change. The pair have created a preschooler-safe version of the geographic pursuit, driven by Henson's year-old series *Dinosaur Train*.

Maura Thompson, associate director of children's and educational programming outreach for PBS affiliate WNET recently discovered the game and its current scope. From there, ideas on how it could translate to the pubcaster's kids audiences started to fly.

"Maura brought us the idea and we could see very quickly how it's a great realization of one of the key messages of *Dinosaur Train*," says Nicole Goldman, VP of marketing and publicity for The Jim Henson Company.



PBS WNET and Henson have placed caches containing *Dinosaur Train*-branded goodies at family-friendly venues across the US

Soon Goldman and Thompson struck up a partnership with predominate Geocaching site Geocache.com and began developing a game dedicated to *Dinosaur Train*. "The whole concept of Geocaching supports our message of getting kids outside and inspiring parents to interact with their kids," says Goldman.

The pair began enlisting local PBS affiliates across the US to promote the concept and convinced several museums, zoos and aquariums to participate in hiding the *Dinosaur Train*-themed geocaches that preschoolers and their parents would eventually hunt down. The caches contain a figurine or stickers of one of the dinos listed in *Dinosaur Train*'s online field guide that delivers images and information about the prehistoric creatures. Latitudinal and longitudinal coordinates

(used to indicate the location of all caches) for the *Dinosaur Train* treasures are housed on a microsite (www.geocaching.com/dinosaurtrain) and are also linked through the series' main website.

"We have 17 [caches] out there right now," says Thompson, listing hiding locations in US cities like Boston, Seattle and New York City. "We have about 100 more to go out and then we are hoping families will start creating their own."

The goal is to build a *Dinosaur Train* Geocaching community big enough

that participants will start planting their own themed caches and connecting with other fans of the series through the game. "We are looking at it as a long-term program," says Goldman. "The viral nature of the game will help it spread," she says. "In six months we expect many more stations to be involved."

Goldman adds that in the future she can see possible partnerships with the property's licensees around the caches. "Perhaps there could be a layer of promotion put into the box," she says. "Picture a coupon in the cache or a promotional code that can then be entered online. The possibilities really are endless." **GR**

LINKS

• Geocaching >	www.geocaching.com
• The Jim Henson Company >	www.henson.com
• PBS WNET >	www.thirteen.org

Gaumont-Alphanim takes on third-party representation

Primarily known for building licensing programs around its own slate of animated series, like sports-themed *Galactik Football*, Paris, France-based Gaumont-Alphanim is now looking to augment its operations by taking on third-party licensing, marketing and distribution.

"We have really wanted to complement our portfolio," says Cédric Petitpas, VP of marketing and licensing and director of international sales. "When we heard that The Jim Henson Company was looking for a licensing agent for Sid the Science Kid and *Dinosaur Train*, we thought it was a good opportunity."

While the ink is still drying on the deals, Petitpas says that Gaumont-Alphanim will be taking on all licensing for both series in French-speaking Europe, and was busy at Licensing Show last month getting the word out.

While Sid (Hasbro) and *Dinosaur Train* (Learning Curve) already have global master toy deals with products expected to hit shelves some time in 2011, many of the other categories are open

across Europe. "Right now we are working on securing a publishing partner for both properties in France," says Petitpas. "It shouldn't take very long."

Petitpas says resources will be invested in finding strategic marketing partnerships to raise the profile of both properties. He's also scouting for more potential IPs to represent over the next year.

On the TV distribution side, Gaumont-Alphanim has just inked a deal to sell the first season of Italian studio Cartoon One's animated half-hour series *Teen Days* in Europe (excluding Spain, Portugal, Greece, the UK, Ireland and Italy), Asia (except Japan), South America, French-speaking Africa and the Middle East.

"It's on the Disney Channel in France and Italy," says Petitpas. "Our first job is to secure a terrestrial broadcaster and we will do the same internationally." As part of the deal, Gaumont-Alphanim is co-producing a second season and handle the L&M rights in French-speaking Europe. **GR**

LINKS

• Gaumont-Alphanim >	www.alphanim.fr
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Mickey Mouse Clubhouse will join original Korean-language programming on Disney's new channel launching in 2011



FULL STEAM AHEAD FOR SOUTH KOREA

by kate calder

Disney and CBeebies are the latest kidnets to make tracks in South Korea

Two more kidcasters are making plans to join the competitive and digitally progressive children's broadcast scene in South Korea.

First up, Disney, which bowed an English version of Disney Channel there in 2002, has been working on launching Korean-language offerings for the last 12 months. And marking a first for the

House of Mouse, the final piece fell into place recently with the formation of a new international joint-venture that was required to gain entry into the country.

"A foreign entity can't own more than 50% of a Korean broadcaster or channel, so in order to launch a Korean version of Disney Channel, we had to find a partner," says Ben Pyne, president of global distribution for Disney Media Networks. He adds that like Cartoon Network and Nickelodeon before it, Disney chose a Korean broadcaster, in this case SK Telecom, as its partner.

The JV will oversee Korean-language versions of Disney Channel and Playhouse Disney in HD multiplex and SD formats over cable, direct-to-home and IPTV platforms and related on-demand digital media services.

With a launch date planned for sometime in 2011, Pyne says a programming team is in the process of being assembled in Seoul that will have input from Disney offices in Hong Kong, Singapore and the US.

Adhering to South Korean content quotas, the ad-supported channels will offer a 60/40 mix of Disney series and local content. Pyne says the net will program established Disney series like *Handy Manny*, *Mickey Mouse Clubhouse* and *Hannah Montana* alongside Korean-produced fare that's relevant and fits with the channel brand. Besides Nick and Cartoon Network, Pyne says local Korean kids channel Tooniverse adds to the highly competitive market.

Along with the potential for expanding Disney's reach into a new territory, Pyne says South Korea is attractive as "the hotbed and center of so many digital initiatives." In particular his team is looking at the expanding mobile space to reinforce value and extend the brand with special packages to support the linear channel. It's worth noting that SK Telecom controls a 51% share of the mobile market. Additionally, 100-megabit streaming broadband has between 85% and 95% penetration in the country, and it will be moving into 4G networks sooner than other territories. Additionally, South Korea's already capable of handling more robust mobile smartphone service. "The government has encouraged pushing into digital and leapfrogging, in many ways, the rest of the world," says Pyne.

"South Korea" continued on page 18

Got it Need it

Profiles in
programming
strategy

Discovery Familia fills programming gap for US Hispanic preschoolers and their moms

Spanish-language cable net Discovery Familia is building up its profile in the Hispanic TV universe with its recent launch on US satellite provider DishLATINO, which has more than 14.3 million subscribers. With the pick-up and its pre-existing carriage on Direct TV, Comcast and Warner Cable Vision, the channel now has almost full market penetration. So it's now in the process of leveraging the increase in reach. The plan is to tap further into the growing US interest in Hispanic television, particularly in content targeting moms and their kids.

"When you consider that 25% of children in the US under the age of five are Hispanic, and it's one of the fastest growing demographics in the country, the implications for the future of the network are clear," says Bilai Joa Silar, VP and channel director of Discovery's US Hispanic networks.

The Discovery US Hispanic group recently conducted a survey in which 90% of Spanish-speaking women surveyed said they're looking for Spanish-language programming that portrays women in a better light. So along with catering to preschoolers, the channel is constructing a strong slate geared towards moms. And this past spring, it made a concerted effort to go after advertisers targeting Hispanic moms at its first-ever upfront presentation.

"The driving philosophy is that it's about her kids, her home and lastly about her," says Joa Silar.

Starting at 6 a.m., the network runs a preschool-focused daypart with curriculum-based series that include a number of acquisitions dubbed into Spanish in-house. *Hi-5* (E1 Entertainment), *Milly, Molly* (Beyond Entertainment, Scrawl Studios), *Sea Princesses* (Southern Star, Neptuno Films, Flama Films) and *Mister Maker* (RDF) are just some of the offerings.



A Spanish-language version of RDF's *Mister Maker* is part of Discovery Familia's new preschool block—the net's looking to make more curriculum-focused acquisitions within the next year

At 9 p.m., the schedule switches to non-fiction programming that focuses on three strands—parenting, home and lifestyle and fashion and beauty advice—all aimed directly at Spanish-speaking moms.

Joa Silar's keeping tight-lipped about acquisition deals currently in progress that are expected to be announced in the fall. But moving forward on the preschool block, she's looking to add premieres of curriculum-based series that are entertaining to both children and moms. In particular, she's interested in prescriptive content and programs that reinforce healthy eating habits.

"Obesity is a concern, especially for the US Hispanic market, so we want to talk about nutrition and how to care for your family," says Joa Silar. As for Hispanic cultural content, she says it's not a priority. "We won't pick something up just because it's Latin American," she says. "We have a bigger responsibility to give viewers rich educational content."

In the meantime, Discovery Familia has created an animated mascot named Doki (a dog-like six-year-old who metaphorically represents the preschool audience) to host the preschool block and help integrate on-

air programming with the channel's online component, which is heavy on games and activities. Additionally, as Doki helps viewers navigate through programming breaks, he ends up teaching them things about the world through his curious adventures. For example, in one interstitial he explores where milk comes from and then learns about the benefits of ingesting calcium.

The network is also gearing up for a major publicity campaign in the fourth quarter of this year that will drive consumer awareness and make marketing opportunities top-of-mind with advertisers.

To complement an on-air rebrand, fall plans include a multi-faceted campaign with several grassroots marketing and PR components. Joa Silar says the main objective will be to reach potential viewers in Hispanic neighborhoods of major US cities like Chicago, L.A. and New York. Discovery Familia is also working on a national media tour to coincide with the marketing push that will highlight the network's benefits directly to Hispanic moms and their kids. **KC**

LINKS

Discovery Familia >

www.discoveryfamilia.com

Disney Junior preps for 2012 launch with first commissions

Disney Junior, the recently unveiled 24/7 preschool net joining the House of Mouse's suite of US kids channels, is busily building up its original programming roster in advance of its 2012 launch. To kick things off, two series have been put into production.

The first is *Doc McStuffins* from Dublin, Ireland-based Brown Bag Films. This animated 52 x 11-minute CGI series features a six-year-old girl nicknamed Doc, who communicates with and heals stuffed animals and toys from the auspices of her backyard clinic. Disney Television Animation's *Jake and the Never Land Pirates*, meanwhile, features two music-filled stories per episode crafted around the exploits of classic characters Captain Hook and Smee, and their new crew of kid pirates led by the enthusiastic Jake.

Disney Junior is set to claim Disney/ABC SOAPnet's spot on US cable carriers, giving it access to 75 million homes. In 2011, Disney Channel's daily preschool block Playhouse Disney will be rebranded as Disney Junior in preparation for the new net's launch the following year. President of Disney Channels Worldwide Carolina Lightcap says the block will ultimately co-exist with the full-fledged Disney Junior when it goes live.

As for content, current Playhouse Disney Worldwide SVP Nancy Kanter is overseeing original programming, while Tracy McAndrew, director of co-productions and acquisitions, is looking after acquisitions.

Outside the US, the 22 Playhouse Disney channels and blocks currently available in 29 languages in 156 territories will be rebranded Disney Junior starting in 2011. *Doc McStuffins* and *Jake and the Never Land Pirates* are set to premiere on Disney Channel and

Disney Junior channels worldwide in 2011.

"It's the next step in our global preschool strategy, which began 10 years ago with the premiere of our first dedicated preschool channel in the UK," says Lightcap.

As for curriculum, Disney Junior is focusing on learning and development themes designed for kids ages two to seven. Beyond *McStuffins* and *Jake*, Lightcap says programming plans are underway to create a sked that blends some 200 old and new series, including *Imagination Movers* and *Jungle Junction*. She says the channel is also busy lining up acquired and original series, movies and short-form series. "We will have the benefit of Disney's vast library of content, as well as a robust development slate for new content," says Lightcap.

Besides an overhaul of its online presence with content for preschoolers, educators and parents, the channel will provide affiliate partners with VOD offerings, an HD network and a Spanish-language feed. Lightcap says Disney Junior, like Disney Channel, won't be ad-supported, but will accept select pro-social sponsorships. **KC**



Disney original *Jake and the Neverland Pirates* debuts next year in advance of the new channel

LINKS

Disney Channel >

www.disney.com

Beyond freshens up boutique slate, gets in on L&M

Factual-focused Aussie distributor Beyond has been steadily sharpening its edge in the kids market and is heading to Cannes looking to add to its small, focused slate of kids series.

"Kids represents a small amount of hours that we acquire, yet it makes up 20% to 25% of our revenue, so it's disproportionately successful," says Fiona Crago, Beyond's GM of distribution, who refers to the company's kids business as boutique.

Much of that revenue comes from carefully selected distribution pick-ups made over the last few years, including *Number Jacks* (UK-based Open Mind Productions), *Milly, Molly* (a co-pro with Singapore-based Scrawl Studios) and *Backyard Science* (produced for Super RTL, TVOntario and Australia's Seven Network).

But Beyond is broadening its catalogue with the recent pickup of *Iconicles*, a 26 x half-hour preschool series produced by UK-based Create Media Ventures with phuuz Entertainment. Along with distribution rights to *Iconicles*, the company has for the first time acquired worldwide licensing and merchandising rights to a series.

"We plan to devote substantial additional resources to maximizing its potential around the world," says Crago. "With that additional infrastructure, we will be keeping our eye out for other properties that meet the same criteria."

To that end, Crago says she's well supplied with preschool series at the moment, though is open to a great new series in that age demo, as well as tween boy properties and live action. Series that have a high probability

of being recommissioned and run longer than 13 episodes are of particular interest right now.

In the meantime, Beyond has started pre-production on a new 26 x 15-minute live-action preschool co-pro called *Tati's Hotel*, with Canadian studios Machine Productions and Screen Door Productions. It's been pre-sold to CiTV in the UK and TVOntario in Canada. *Toy Box*, a 75 x 35-minute series for kids four to six, is being produced in-house for Seven Network in Australia. The company is also working on the second season of 26 x half-hour *Rush TV*—an extreme sports series for older kids currently airing on ABC 3 Australia. **KC**

LINKS

Beyond Entertainment >

www.beyond.com.au



Grompf makes for a gentle giant

My Friend Grompf is a new 52 x 13-minute animated series for kids six to 11 about a precocious boy, Arthur, and his best friend, who happens to belong to the mythical yeti species. Adopted by Arthur's family as a furry little baby, Grompf grows quickly into a giant creature. He takes up every square inch of the sofa, has the monster strength to pulverize a wall with the slam of a door and will crash through the floor if (and when) he jumps on the bed. Basically, Grompf's a walking disaster, but he goes to school, goofs around just like other kids and he's Arthur's best friend.

In one episode, Grompf ends up being the third wheel on Arthur's Valentine's Day date with his crush, Nathalie. The boy explains the concept of love to Grompf, who misunderstands and rushes off to tell Arthur's teacher that he loves her. The monster's wacky approach actually helps the teacher get rid of an unwanted intruder and, in turn, she rewards him with a kiss on the cheek. Jumping for joy, Grompf ends up wrecking the romantic plans of Arthur's parents and then dive-bombs Arthur's rowboat just as he's about to get a kiss from Nathalie and, naturally, ruins the moment.

Produced by Paris-based Toon Factory, the series has been pre-sold to France 3 and Disney Channel France, and the studio is working with an estimated budget of US\$6.4 million towards a planned September 2011 delivery.

New family comedy on the block

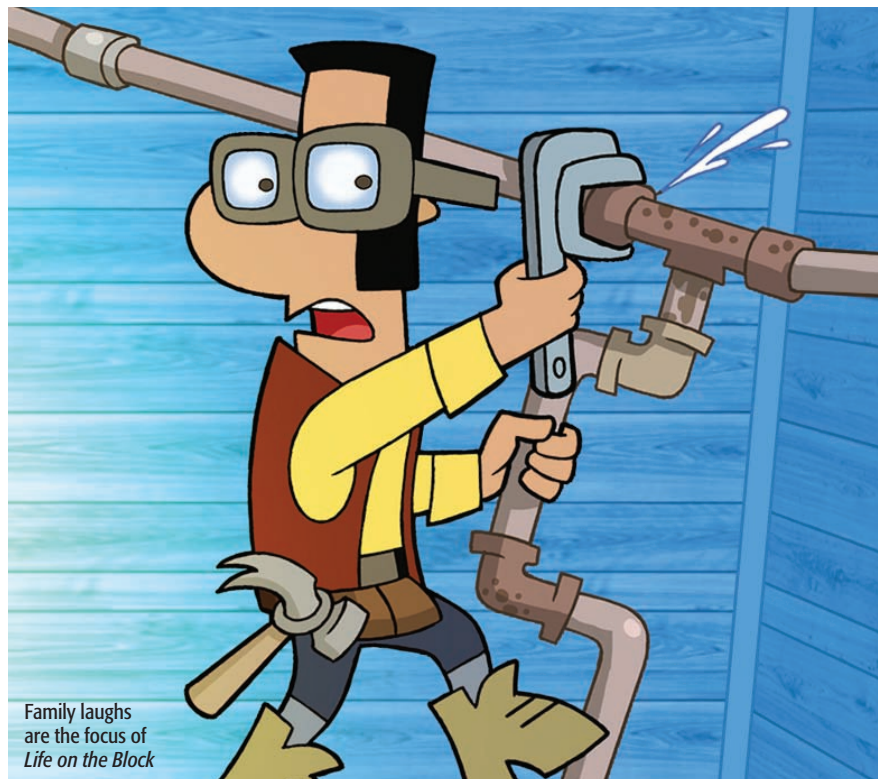
New 26 x 22-minute all-ages comedy *Life on the Block* from Montreal, Canada's Spectra Animation ramps up the laughs as it tells the story of average good guy and dad, Stan. He lives with his angst-riddled, adolescent daughter Audrey, his hyperactive six-year-old son, Squirt, all while dealing with his ex-wife-turned-truck

driver and serving as superintendent of a small apartment building. The dwelling also happens to be populated by a motley crew of wacky characters that operates as a dysfunctional family of sorts, and Stan is forever playing the role of peace keeper. To top it off, he has to contend with an ambitious real estate mogul who is a constant threat to the neighborhood.

The series was created and is being co-produced by L.A.-based Tremblay Bros. Studios. It's based on a cast of characters developed and performed by a Quebecois comedy duo as part of their stage act, which is famous in the French-speaking Canadian province. Brother Christian Tremblay says Quebec audiences will immediately recognize the characters and they also possess universal comic appeal.

Spectra VP of development and sales Sophie Roy says the budget for the series is approximately US\$8 million, and delivery is set for January 2011. *Life on the Block* will roll out in primetime on French-language Canadian net SRC, which also co-developed the series.

The animated comedy is aimed at families, and Roy contends it's ideal for early prime-time slots currently occupied by the likes of *The Simpsons*. The original voice recordings are performed in English and are then being dubbed in French. Heading into MIPCOM, Spectra is looking for further presales.



"South Korea" continued from page 14

CBeebies takes its first step

Also getting into the market, CBeebies has launched as an English-language foreign transmission on KT (formerly Korean Telecom) IPTV service, Qook TV.

Two years ago, South Korea—which boasts one of the highest broadband penetration rates in the world—established a regulatory framework for IPTV that allowed service providers to go beyond VOD services and offer linear broadcasting. The move essentially put Korea's already booming IPTV market in direct competition with its traditional broadcast sector. Even prior to the adoption of this legislation, the proliferation of IPTV in Korea had spurred an increase in Western-based kids entertainment in the market, where Korean and Japanese content still rules supreme.

Mark Whitehead, SVP and GM of BBC Worldwide Channels Asia, says the competition from emerging IPTV services, combined with the new channel of delivery, presented the opportunity to work with KT to launch CBeebies on Qook TV.

Whitehead explains the channel chose to delve into the territory at a time when South Korea's economy is expected to grow between 4% and 5% per year in both 2010 and 2011. He adds the growth of the pay-TV market reflects this upward trend. Qook TV has expanded to service more 1.17 million IPTV users, including VOD subscribers, since its launch in 2007, and is aiming to have 1.9 million subscribers by year's end. Qook TV carries 89 linear channels, 80,000 pieces of VOD content and advanced interactive services.

"Korea is a key market for BBC's Channels business," says Whitehead. "The channel's programming is customized to appeal



CBeebies' top-rated *In the Night Garden* gets its Korean debut on the channel's new English-language service next year

to and suit the developmental needs of distinct age groups, encouraging preschoolers to learn through play."

The channel will be championing some of its top-rated UK programs in the new territory, including *In the Night Garden*, *Charlie and Lola* and *Mister Maker*.

The launch of CBeebies in Korea is an important one for the channel's long-term growth strategy in Asia, says Whitehead. He says CBeebies is also looking to widen distribution and bolster its subscriber base in Japan, North Asia and South Asia. **S**

LINKS

• CBeebies >	www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies
• Disney Channel >	www.disneychannel.com
• Qook TV >	www.qook.co.kr
• SK Telecom >	www.sktelecom.com



With the help of rap legend Flava Flav, *YooHoo & Friends* will be ready to roll in Q1 2011

Eco-awareness in a cute package

The socially conscious concept behind LA-based Toon Zone Studio's new animated core-kid series *YooHoo & Friends* revolves around five fuzzy creatures that travel the world in search of the magical gemstones that will restore their real human identities. The twist is the creatures were once greedy executives, whose corporate decisions ravaged the environment and were only put to a stop when Father Time stormed their HQ and turned them into harmless little animals.

Flavor Flav is lined up to voice Father Time—who sports the rap legend's signature time piece around his neck—and he infuses the character with outrageous zeal. The five fuzzy characters, meanwhile, embody their human attributes from natural leader YooHoo to Roodee, who headed up product development and now invents MacGyver-like solutions.

YooHoo and co. debuted in January 2007 as plush toys in Korea, produced by international toyco Aurora. They have since generated more than US\$140 million in sales worldwide.

A website that launched in April 2008 features tidbits about the real animals upon which the cuddly characters are modeled and is stocked with mini-games and virtual pets. As well, a series of dialogue-free eps commissioned by Aurora have aired in Korea and some Eastern European territories.

Toon Zone, which has bought the IP and kept Aurora on as a licensing and merchandising partner, further developed the concept and story arc with the help of animation writer and veteran producer David Feiss. The series' new original animation has also been aged up from preschool to kids six to 10 and was given an eco-focus to appeal to international audiences. Toon Zone has also teamed up with LA-based Animation Development Company to fully finance the series. Budgeted at roughly US\$8 million for 52 x 11-minute eps, the series should start delivery in Q1 2011. **KC**

LINKS

• Spectra Animation >	www.spectra-animation.ca
• Toon Factory >	www.toonfactory.fr
• Toon Zone >	www.toonzonestudios.com



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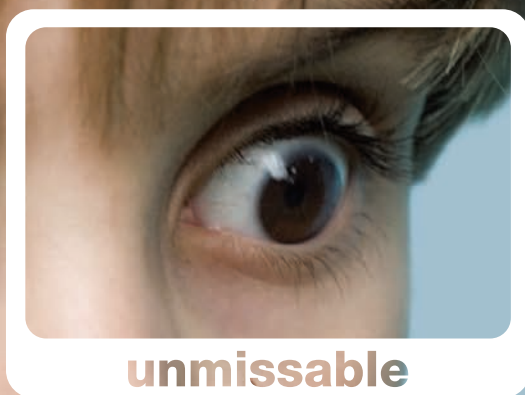
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by gary rusak

**Mattel scares up a
new 360-degree
IP with spooky
and stylish
Monster High**

including Frankie Stein, Clawdeen Wolf and Draculaura, as they navigate the perils of high school.

"We are doing this in a fun, humorous way," says Susie Lecker, VP of marketing for Mattel. "It really gets at the bonds of friendship that are created in high school and the challenges of fitting in."

Also at the heart of the IP is a fashion-forward aesthetic, which revolves around a highly stylized, slick design tinged with a touch of Goth. Mattel, however, has been careful not to over-emphasize the darker aspects of the characters, carefully stating that Monster High is "more OMG than RIP."

Content will also help drive Monster High into the mass market. To that end, the toyco has produced 15 webisodes, running between 90 seconds and two minutes in length, that reside on the property's website. "We decided to start off with content that would allow our characters to introduce themselves to our target

For the first time in decades, international toy behemoth Mattel has developed an entirely new IP that it hopes will capture the attention of tween and teen girls with an innovative marketing and CP approach.

Dubbed Monster High, the new property features the teenage descendents of some of the world's most infamous monsters,

audience," says Barry Waldo, VP of entertainment development and licensing at Mattel. "It gives the audience a little of the flavor of who they are and the humorous twists that they encounter."

Of-the-moment pop culture references also permeate the shorts, with puns on celebrity names abounding. One webisode, for example, shows the cast of monsters-cum-students spiralling into a tizzy in anticipation of a visit from the Jonas, er, Jaundiced Brothers.

To get the ball rolling, Mattel made a major online media buy for placement on teen- and tween-oriented sites like Stardoll.com to drive traffic to the Monster High website (www.monsterhigh.com). "We put out teasers of the webisodes and it has seemed to work so far," says Lecker. In two months, the new site had garnered 41 million impressions, and the webisodes were viewed more than two million times, she says.

The next wave of content will venture a little deeper into the IP and feature a 30-minute webisode that is currently in production. This one focuses on the backstory of Frankie Stein, and Mattel is looking to follow it up with other in-depth pieces about the main characters.

On the teen side of the content, Mattel has inked a deal with New York Times bestselling author Lisi Harrison to produce a series of young adult novels based on the IP. The first one will hit retail shelves in September with a 150,000-copy print run guaranteed by publisher Little, Brown Books for Young Readers. Mattel is currently searching out a book retail partnership that will serve as the headquarters for the publishing program.

"Monster High" continued on page 22

Let them eat logos...and kid characters

Imagine the day when you can order SpongeBob SquarePants or the Los Angeles Lakers as a pizza topping. Well, dream no more. Tacoma, Washington-based Lucks Food Decorating Company has spent the last few months quietly amassing a stable of kid entertainment licenses that will soon be making their debuts on piping hot pizza. The 100-year-old company's proprietary technology enables the creation of edible images that can stand up to the heat.

Launched in March, Lucks' Pizza Fest branded edible images might seem like just a fun, quaint idea until you consider the volume of takeout pizza consumed yearly in the US. "Mom and Pop pizzerias account for three billion pizzas a year," says James Sachs, partner at Pennsylvania-based licensing consultancy Harris Sachs. And there are roughly 45,000 independent pizzerias pumping them out, making the pursuit of even a small slice of the market worthwhile.

With that in mind, Lucks CEO Rick Ellis enlisted Sachs to explore licensing possibilities for the product. After inking an exclusive distribution deal with the Richmond, Virginia-based Performance Food Groups' Roma division—specialists in the distribution of food products to independent pizzerias throughout



The Lakers, and soon SpongeBob, can be ordered as a topping thanks to Pizza Fest edible images

the US—Sachs turned his attention to finding more licenses to apply to the product.

"We wanted to make this a grassroots effort," says Sachs, explaining that Roma distributes the product to hundreds of indie pizza parlors throughout the US. The edible licensed decals are then placed on the finished pizza, and about 40-seconds later they melt, fusing to the pie.

Positioning it as the "ultimate pizza topping," Sachs says the decals retail for between US\$1.50 and US\$3.50 apiece. However, he envisions high-margin/high-volume independent pizzeria owners using the product as more of a promotional tool.

"Some operators aren't going to charge customers for the decal because their margins

are so big," Sachs says, adding he believes pizza places will use the edible images as a rallying point to host events themed around a particular property or sports team.

"The pizza places can become party central," says Sachs. "They can have the cups, the paper plates, the napkins and now the pizza—all branded. The local pizzeria could have all sorts of point-of-sale material."

On the licensing front, Lucks already has deals in place with Nickelodeon, NBA, NHL and WWE. Talks are also underway with Hasbro, Disney, HIT Entertainment and Marvel. But the company is always looking for more partners and was at Licensing Show in Vegas last month, scouring the event floor for potential partners.

Sachs says that since gaining national exposure in the US earlier this year, with mentions on Jay Leno and Jimmy Fallon's late night talk shows and ESPN, his Blackberry hasn't stopped vibrating. "There is not much new going on in licensing right now," he says. "When something new comes along it has a tremendous 'wow' factor." **GR**

LINKS

Harris Sachs > www.licenseadvisor.com
Lucks Food Decorating Company > www.lucks.com

"Monster High" continued from page 21

Mattel has also inked a preliminary deal with Hollywood studio Universal Pictures to develop a feature-length live-action musical tentatively set for big-screen release in 2012. Writers Alfred Gough and Miles Miller (*Smallville* and *Spider-Man 2*, respectively) are already attached to the project.

On the CP side, Mattel is looking to capture both sides of the demographic in a different way. For tweens still playing with dolls, Mattel has already shipped the initial line to Toys 'R' Us. On the teen side, US mall-based fashion and accessory retailer Justice is serving as the home of all Monster High softlines via a DTR exclusive launching this September.

"Our relationship with Justice is a full partnership," says Waldo. "It will be airing the webisodes in-store...[and]...really bringing the story to life from a retail perspective."



Mattel is taking a two-pronged approach to Monster High merch, aiming fashion and soft dolls at tweens and following up a teen-targeted Young Adult publishing program with a US retail exclusive at mall-based Justice stores this fall

Moving forward, Waldo says he expects to open up further licensing doors for the IP, especially as the movie nears completion, but for now Mattel is taking a measured and careful approach. "We didn't want to do an in-and-out product line," he says. "In the early stages we said 'No' to more people than we said 'Yes' to. We are happy about the excitement, but we know about the dangers of over-licensing it too soon." **S**

LINKS

Mattel > www.mattel.com

Anti-mosquito tech looks to puncture market

The quest for a 100% kid-friendly, chemical-free mosquito deterrent has gone into overdrive in the last few years with the heightened awareness of insect-borne afflictions such as the West Nile Virus. One UK-based company believes it has found the perfect solution and is looking to expand its offerings into the licensed goods arena.

"The technology is based on an active ingredient we extract from the Eucalypts tree," says George Costas, CEO of Arnywear. "We then further refine it. It's very skin-friendly and not chemical." He's referring to his company's patented ifabric technology (IFT), which can be injected into almost anything employing fabric, including plush, apparel and accessories. IFT

works by secreting a powerful, yet natural insect-repellent vapor. The smell is undetectable to humans and Costas says it has none of the health hazards associated with Deet, the most common mosquito repellent on the market today.

Currently, IFT items are selling in the UK at major retailers including Tesco and Mothercare, as well as via Arnywear's website. The offering encompasses what are essentially swaths of IFT cloth that range from the size of bandanas to shawls and bed sheets (US\$15 to US\$40) and can be used as head wraps and blankets etc. to drape over exposed skin and prevent those itchy bites.

While keeping sales figures close to the vest, Costas says that sell-through has been brisk, sustaining the company without the

need for licensed product for about five years. However, things are about to change. Arnywear has entered into a preliminary partnership with UK-based Bellagio Time to develop branded Sesame Street fabric watchbands featuring IFT for sale in the US and Canada. Costas is looking at additional North

American licensing partners to bring the technology to the mainstream. (The tech is currently undergoing regulatory testing State-side.)

"Since it can basically be applied to any fabric, it would be up to the licensee to decide what to do with IFT," says Costas. He believes that products infused with IFT could be sold at mass retail as well as speciality and drugstores, with an emphasis on outdoor



Arnywear's generic mosquito-resistant fabric, now the company's turning to licensing

kiosks at zoos and parks.

"In the UK, it's mostly used in gardening and travel products," Costas says. "But in certain regions of the US, I can see it being put into everyday items."

Further to that point, Costas says he's concentrating his first efforts on finding partners in territories like the Southeastern US, where mosquitoes are persistent pests. He's also open to discussing any number of different partnerships with manufacturers and owners of kids IP. "We are in the last throes of achieving the regulatory accreditation," he says. "So we are certainly looking for partners in North America." **GR**

LINKS

Arnywear >

www.arnywear.co.uk

Fat Brain keeps its mind focused on specialty tier

It might seem an unlikely place for an innovator in the toy retail industry, but Elkhorn, Nebraska is where you will find the headquarters of Fat Brain Toys. Entering its eighth year of operations, the private company that started as an online retailer and entered the bricks-and-mortar realm with a 2,700-square-foot, 6000-SKU outlet two years ago, has been making a name for itself in the kids specialty area due in large part to its dogged pursuit of differentiation.

"We are trying to stay a step to the left of everything that is available in the market," says co-founder Mark Carson.

Quality is Fat Brain's guiding principle, according to Carson, who says that he's had to make some hard choices by not stocking licensed product that currently fills shelves at

mass-market retailers. "We are trying to find those products that have an inherent value in them," says Carson. "We're not just relying on a character to sell the product."

The overt anti-licensing stance seems to be working. Fat Brain reportedly does around US\$10 million in annual sales, and its website has more than 800,000 registered customers. With a modest marketing and advertising budget focused on paid online searches, digital buys and organic search engine optimization, Fat Brain has developed a reputation in the toy business as the little firm that could.

"We crossed a threshold two or three years ago where more people now search online for Fat Brain Toys rather than the products we sell," says Carson.

With 29 different categories of SKUs, Fat Brain has moved away from its initial boy-centric, building toy-bent to offer a wide range of apparel, softlines, electronics, plush and décor. While there are no concrete plans to open more physical locations, Carson says it is something the company is considering doing over the next two years.

Hitting the major toy show circuit, including New York Toy Fair and ASTRA, Carson says he is always on the lookout for innovative new products that would serve his core customer. As Fat Brain's reputation grows, he is fielding an increasing number of pitches from toy inventors looking for a breakthrough outlet. **GR**

LINKS

Fat Brain Toys >

www.fatbraintoy.com



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SCHOOL'S OUT!

HOW US KIDS AND TEENS SPEND THEIR SUMMERS

by erin miller

nickelodeon

KALEIDOSCOPE
REFLECTING TRENDS...TODAY AND TOMORROW

Ahhh, the “lazy days of summer” are upon us. Certainly, the summer months are presumed to be a time of rest, relaxation and “No School!” But it’s common knowledge that most US families live extremely scheduled lifestyles these days, so we wanted to understand whether or not kids and teens are truly taking a break from their regular activities and embracing the “lazy” aspect of the season. In this edition of Kaleidoscope, we thought it was the perfect time to find out how eight- to 17-year-olds are spending their free time and explore their overall perceptions and thoughts about the summer.

Boys and girls of all ages mostly agree that summer is the “best time of year,” using words such as “fun,” “relaxing” and “exciting” to describe what the season means to them. Summer also means “vacation time,” “family time” and “friend time.”

Though we know from other research that kids generally enjoy their classes, a highlight of their summer includes “being out of school,” almost doubling the response to things such as “going swimming” and “having more free time.” In fact, it was hard for kids to name only one thing they like so much about summer, as evidenced by this 10-year-old boy who said, “Not having to do schoolwork and getting to go places is the best [thing about summer]. Staying up late and sleeping in and having barbeques. Not being cold and wearing shorts!” The exception may be tween and early-teen girls, who often said summer feels “too long” and “lonely.” Taking into consideration how social girls are at this stage in their lives, it’s no wonder

that they’re anxiously awaiting the start of school so they can see their friends.

Overwhelmingly, kids and teens feel they have more free time in the summer than the rest of the year, proving that their hectic lifestyles are dialed down during these months. This is especially true among girls ages eight to 13, who feel they have a lot of free time to spend during summer months. “The best part of summer is having time to go and see family and not feel rushed about getting home on time,” said one 12-year-old girl. “When you get back from a trip, you don’t have to worry about all the work you’ll have to do when you get home. It’s like you’re still on vacation,” she added.

While exploring whether or not healthy lifestyles are maintained in the summer, respondents told us that it doesn’t necessarily have an impact. We were curious to know how kids’ eating habits during the summer compare to how they eat year-round, and six out of 10 respondents said they eat just as healthfully during the summer. When it comes to physical activity, however, kids and teens feel they do get more exercise in the summer—particularly eight- to 10-year-old boys and girls.

Taking a look at the types of scheduled activities kid and teens are taking part in, we found that only 25% are attending a camp (day or sleep away) this summer, with the majority of them enrolled in day camps. Again, this is driven by the younger set of respondents and decreases significantly as kids move into their teen

“Kaleidoscope” continued on page 26

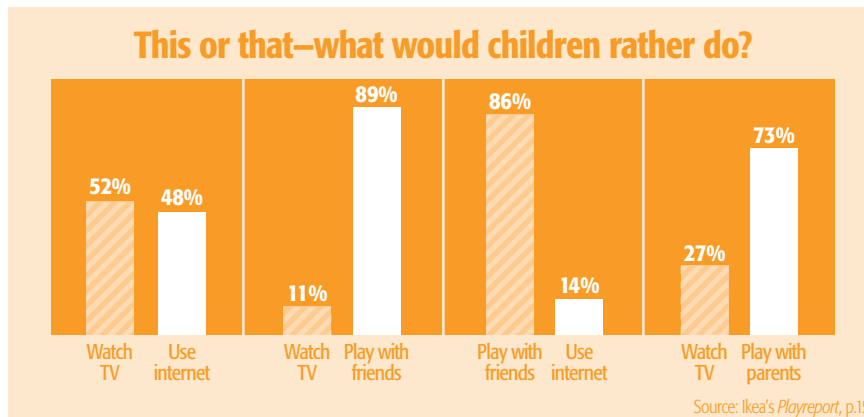
New global study finds kids prefer play

Believe it or not, when given the choice, it seems most children would pick playing with their friends and parents over logging time in front of a TV or computer screen. At least that's what a new Ikea-funded global research study called *Playreport* has revealed.

At first glance, it appears unlikely that one of the world's largest furniture manufacturers and retailers would pour resources into mounting a wide-ranging study on kids' behavior, but Janice Simonsen, US Ikea design spokesperson, believes that the info will be valuable for the business. "The home is in many ways the most important playground," says Simonsen. "Our aim is to increase awareness, start meaningful discussions and hopefully get parents and children to play more together in the process."

London-based firm Research Now fielded an online survey in 25 countries, including the US, China, Japan and Russia, on behalf of Ikea. It ended up conducting approximately 11,000 interviews with both parents and children, making *Playreport* the largest single study of its kind.

Playreport is now being used to develop products for Ikea's children's range. "What the study has given us is not so much information about a product level, but more knowledge on trends related to how children live," says Simonsen. "With this information we can create better solutions and give families with children ideas." (At press time it was still



too early in the process to say what specific information will be used in product creation.)

As for the study's most surprising finding, Ikea Sweden design spokesperson Sara Schestrom says *Playreport's* results dispel a long-held belief that kids would rather stare at a TV screen than interact with parents or friends. The study found 30% of kids interviewed named playing with friends their favorite activity, while 15% chose playing computer games and just 6% named watching TV.

"Most children prefer to play with their parents than watch TV," Schestrom says, stressing that parents are also interested in partaking in casual activities with their children rather than prescribed ones. "Seven in 10 parents would like to 'just chill' with their children," she says.

The study also reveals that time constraints are still a major problem facing

the modern family. Longer work hours have resulted in 45% of parents feeling they don't have enough time to play with their kids, while 26% think they are too stressed out to play and 46% admit to feeling guilty about not spending enough time with their offspring.

Simonsen, however, prefers to look at the more positive information gathered. "It was quite relieving to see from the results that children actually prefer to play rather than watch TV," she says. "That children just want to spend time with friends and families is very reassuring. We were also happy to see the majority of parents believe that play is important to children's development." **GR**

LINKS

- Ikea > www.ikea.com
- Research Now > www.researchnow.co.uk

"Kaleidoscope" continued from page 25

years. As for those teens who do attend, sports camps are hosting almost three times as many teens as any other age group, with the majority being teen boys. Continuing on the theme of sports, 28% of respondents said they are playing at least one organized team sport this summer, with baseball leading the way among boys and softball being tops with girls.

When it comes to vacations, just over half of the sample said they are either taking, or have taken, a family vacation this summer. As expected, summer vacation does become more common as household income increases.

Summertime isn't all about the outdoors for kids and teens, either. Their media consumption also increases, with 58% of respondents saying they feel they watch more TV in the summer, followed by 53% who report playing video games more, and 49% saying they watch more DVDs and theatrical movies during the season. When taking a closer look at online activity, kids and teens consistently

feel that they spend just as much time in the summer doing things online as they do throughout the entire year. The exception to this is playing online games, which all ages and both genders agree they do more of in the summer. **N**

We will continue this exploration of summer among kids, teens and parents in September's Kaleidoscope. For more information, contact Kaleidoscope@nick.com

(Source: Nickelodeon Kids & Family Research, June, 2010; Touchstone Research. Quantitative Sample Size: N = 500 kids.)

In an effort to keep you in touch with our audience and give a voice to our consumers, the Brand and Consumer Insights Department at Nickelodeon Kids & Family has created Nickelodeon Kaleidoscope. Every month, Kaleidoscope will capture key areas of interest across the kid and family cultural landscape, provide an understanding of attitudes and behaviors, and report on trends and buzz.



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Web-safety and digital citizenship program Webonauts Academy is on the way from PBS Kids

STATIC
SNACKIES

by wendy goldman getzler

THE NEW WAVE OF SURFING

**Innovative online-
safety solutions
proliferate to
protect a younger
web demo**

Kids are hopping online at an increasingly younger age, so it's no surprise that issues surrounding privacy, bullying and safe communication continue to mount. In fact, these safety concerns have spawned a new wave of innovative solutions from content creators, software engineers and virtual worlds. They're all looking to provide an equally engaging and safe experience for even the youngest of web users.

"The computer is an integral part of life and engagement is a big problem for kids who can't write and read yet," says Gai Havkin, founder of Israel-based Kido'z, a now-global software solution that allows children to consume media via one browser without the need for parental assistance. Drawing on his own experience as a father in the digital age, the Israeli entrepreneur's visual-based browser is designed for kids ages three to eight and has already found profit and international attention since launching in May. And with a new round of funding and distribution deals underway (computer manufacturer MSI is pre-installing Kido'z software on six million computers this year), Havkin forecasts that his product will be available on one out of four computers sold in the next year.

In many ways, Kido'z is a content aggregator for kids. It's a conduit for tailored, pre-screened, kid-friendly content that's linked and shared within the Kido'z community, whose membership numbers in the six figures and spans 80 countries. What sets Kido'z apart from other safe browsing sites, touts Havkin, is the fact that it caters to parental engagement. For a yearly subscription of US\$39, parents can download the software, enter their child's age, and then leave the hand-holding to the server that permits the viewing of safe content and blocks inappropriate stuff. So far, kids are spending roughly 11 hours a month using the browser.

In providing content that's relevant and tailored to the user's demographic group, Havkin relies on outlets, such as US pubcaster PBS, whose websites are compliant with the US government's Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) guidelines.

And so far, the concept of kid browsers like Kido'z sits well with Sara DeWitt, VP of PBS Kids Interactive, who oversees the broadcaster's two children's websites as well as its content on other digital platforms (i.e. iPhone and iPad). But since most kids still surf without the aid of a child-friendly browser, DeWitt says her team wants to make sure they learn how to be safe within the broader internet environment.

"PBS is often the first internet experience for kids because we have such high trust with parents," says DeWitt. And part of that trust is derived from PBS refusing to collect personal information from children. With nine million unique visitors a month, averaging six years of age, PBS Kids has enough at stake when it comes to protecting user safety on its websites.

"If you think about the last few years, so many social media opportunities have exploded. Facebook is supposed to be for users 13 and up, but so many [younger] kids are aware of it," notes DeWitt. With the nature of the constantly changing landscape in mind, DeWitt and her team are launching Webonauts Academy this fall. The educational program targets seven- to nine-year-olds and is aiming to teach kids about web safety. Kids who work their way through the Academy's online educational scenarios about cyber bullying, rumors and safety will then be eligible for a web-surfing "license." Additionally, the new login system on portal PBS Kids Go! will direct new visitors to the Webonauts Academy demo.

As for preschool PBS patrons, who DeWitt says play "within the clean walled garden" of the PBS Kids sites, all user-generated content is censored by a proprietary triple-review process.

But the very young, it seems, aren't necessarily the web's most vulnerable user group. International virtual world Habbo Hotel, for one, is continuously amping up security features to protect its 15 million monthly visitors from cyber bullying and unsafe communication.

"Our main concern is bullying, which affects almost all teenagers. You can catch people, but bullying is more difficult to monitor," says Sandra Welzenbach, the North American community manager at Sulake, the Copenhagen-based company that owns Habbo Hotel.

As both a precautionary and reactionary measure, Habbo has resorted to enlisting the help of localized police forces in some communities to maintain order within Hotel walls. The Info Bus collaboration with Canada's Ontario Provincial Police, for example, allows kids to partake in weekly 15-minute online chats with real police officers, where issues surrounding bullying, foul language and safety education are addressed.

While weekly police interactions have proven to be effective in Canada, the virtual world as a whole is patrolled 24/7, employing at least two moderators on every community site and automated filters. (Habbo's own Bobba filter is in place to block prohibited words and info, especially personal information.) During a four-hour shift, moderators and auto-filters often field up to 1,500 reports from Habbo users.

games, watch videos, send and receive gifts, and update their status with pre-approved phrases.

"Adults are using social media more and more, and kids mimic adult behavior," says Dhillon, adding that leveraging the viral nature of the world's largest social network has already proven successful for the free service.

"We've seen really great adoption and user feedback," says Dhillon, who is now looking at making his product accessible via mobile device apps. "Our platform certainly will expect to have a presence on [mobile] devices," he says. "There's a big difference between desktop and mobile. Privacy, expression and creativity are all part of it, so you need to match user interaction with the appropriate device."

Certainly more US kids than ever own a mobile phone. According to an April 2010 study from the Pew Internet and American Life Project, roughly 75% of 12- to 17-year-olds in the US have their own phones, up from 45% in 2004. Children are also getting phones at younger ages, as the study revealed 58% of 12-year-olds now own a cell phone, a big leap from just 18% in



Same goal, different approaches—Togetherville (left), the new social networking site for kids and families, harnesses the power of Facebook to help parents set up safe online communities for their children, while web browser Kidoz (right) is designed to filter internet content and make surfing worry-free for parents of three- to eight-year-olds

"We are much more aware of what can happen if they give out personal information as opposed to their parents," says Welzenbach. "When parents are really involved, kids know what to do online."

And that's essentially the motto driving Togetherville, Mandeep Singh Dhillon's brand-new social network that allows kids to play and connect within a trusted community of friends and family. Unlike the Kidoz model, Togetherville relies completely on parents to create their children's communities through existing Facebook connections and applications. (Togetherville is not affiliated with Facebook, but harnesses its interface.)

The new network, which launched in May and is operated by Dhillon and his partner in California's Silicon Valley, emerged from a need to allow kids under 10 to participate safely in social networking. It's designed to prevent them from having the same online experience as their parents.

"Facebook was not made for them," says Dhillon. Instead, Togetherville allows parents to tap their own network of Facebook friends to build an enclosed separate community where kids play

2004. And with an anticipated growth of internet usage within the mobile market, DeWitt at PBS says web-safety education needs to be applicable to the new age of portable browsing.

"I think the iPad puts more pressure on broadcast distributors like us to think carefully about privacy and safety on an all-new platform," DeWitt says. Similarly, Ann Miura-Ko, a partner at venture capital firm Floodgate, which invested in Togetherville, underscores the importance of extending safe browsing experiences to mobile devices.

"Mobile is going to become an increasingly critical part of any child or teen-focused product," says Miura-Ko. She also believes the idea of kids hiding behind avatars—whether on a computer or handheld device—is being rendered obsolete, as more kids want to present their real personalities online. "The pressing question," she contends, "is how do you allow them to do that safely?"

LINKS

Floodgate >	www.floodgate.com
Kidoz >	www.kidoz.net
PBS >	www.pbs.org
Togetherville >	www.togetherville.com

A large, stylized wireframe illustration of a game console and a controller, rendered in a light blue color against a white background. The console is on the left, and the controller is on the right, both shown in a perspective view. The wireframe structure highlights the geometric shapes of the devices.

A family affair

by wendy goldman getzler

Innovations at E3 focus on getting more kids and parents into the game

Last month, the interactive and video game industry's premier trade and consumer show took place once again in the familiar environs of the L.A. Convention Center. A trio of new devices squarely focused on making game play an all-family affair drove the hype at this year's E3 event, which drew 45,600 attendees from all parts of the globe.

The 3DS (Nintendo's latest edition of its portable DS device), Sony PlayStation's Move controller and the Kinect motion sensor for Microsoft Xbox 360 held center stage at the show organized by the Entertainment Software Association. All three pieces of technology are strategically designed to attract more casual, family-wide consumer adoption. In fact, with Nintendo removing the need for 3-D glasses and Microsoft chucking the physical controller altogether, there's no denying that the industry, which generated US\$15.25 billion in video game content sales in 2009, is lifting developmental barriers for younger gamers and enabling them to better engage in interactive experiences.

3-D that doesn't need four eyes

While the gaming economy remains soft (Washington, New York-based research firm

The NPD Group pegged 2009 US video game software sales at US\$9.916 billion, compared to US\$10.99 billion in 2008), the Nintendo 3DS is poised to spike sales and 3-D game play, for that matter. The new 3-D portable gaming system, which took home the E3 Best of Show Award this year, is set to roll out to US retailers by March 31, 2011. Succeeding the still-hot DS portable system, which NPD says sold 11.22 million units in the US last year, the 3DS eliminates the need to wear special glasses to see 3-D effects (unlike the crop of 3-D TVs currently on the market) and is tricked out with sophisticated multimedia capabilities. A movie player, a 3-D camera that allows for picture sharing between 3DS units, you name it.

"The 3DS made a significant impact at E3 and made believers out of many skeptics in 3-D technology," says Anita Frazier, video game industry analyst at NPD. "Even without knowing the price, it's bound to be the least expensive option for engaging in 3-D content for the foreseeable future."

While Nintendo had yet to set the SRP for the device by press time, gamers are already buying into its robust features that rival, if not exceed, those of this generation of smartphones. Using one inner- and two outward-facing cameras,

Microsoft Kinect games like *Dance Central* (right) replace the controller with full body movements, making it conducive to a family-wide entertainment experience



the lenses are built to allow one pair of eyes to view two distinct images at the same time, creating the 3-D effect on its 3.53-inch widescreen LCD display with 800 x 240 pixel resolution. An added Depth Slider allows users to select the level of 3-D effect they're comfortable with and further personalize the experience. Users can also turn off the feature altogether. And while Nintendo didn't invent glasses-free 3-D technology, the 3DS has managed to successfully scale it down and provide varying degrees of engagement—a feature that makes it alluring to gamers of all ages.

Nintendo is developing proprietary games for the 3DS, such as the upcoming title *PilotWings Resort*, as well as translating current properties like Mario Kart for the platform. Among the 3DS titles generating industry buzz

at the show was *Nintendogs + Cats*, which allows kids to select animals and interact with them on a more textured level than the game's previous iterations.

"The 3DS gives kids new ways to play with representational thinking," says Warren Buckleitner, editor of New Jersey-based *The Children's Technology Review*, a journal devoted to evaluating digital software and devices aimed at kids. The 3DS is especially empowering for this group, he says. It puts control directly into their hands, allows them to use customizable graphics, and it is portable. And with richer kid-friendly titles in store, he adds, the device has the potential to border on Wii territory in terms of widening the casual gaming experience.

"This 'put the child first' way of thinking has led Nintendo to many of its most important

innovations," says Buckleitner. "Anyone knows that kids like to move around rather than sit. So that's why they've made the child the co-publisher—the ideas flow two ways."

It's not just Nintendo that'll be chasing the software market for 3DS. Enthusiasm for the platform has also spread like wildfire among third-party game developers. Indie developers like Lyon, France-based SmackDown Productions are eyeing the new device and figuring out how it will work for kid-friendly titles.

"You can see the characters come off the screen," says Laurent Benadiba, CEO of SmackDown Productions, which focuses on creating child-centric and female-oriented titles for the Wii and DS. It debuted a new Build-A-Bear Workshop game and *Secret Flirts* for tween girls at E3. Benadiba, who runs the

Nintendogs + Cats for the 3DS adds a new dimension to virtual pet games



25-person gaming company, is very interested in the immersive nature of the platform, despite its one key drawback—the user's eyes need to be directly aligned with the screen in order to see 3-D imagery.

"The focus ahead will be 3-D without glasses and support motion controller with glasses. And the 3-D platform of today is really the 3DS," says Benadiba. Still the risk, he says, is that new platforms will continue to create niche markets, thereby increasing the need for multiplatform games. The developer now has to provide the right technology and the right game play for each market, making the process much more complicated than it used to be.

"Family games in the past were synonymous with the Wii," says Benadiba, and now more options from Nintendo, Sony and Microsoft are opening the door to new types of games.

NPD's Frazier believes that these new devices have to provide compelling experiences in order to drive consumer adoption, as they're aimed more at casual audiences than they are at the core gamer.

As much as it seems like Sony and Microsoft are jockeying for a piece of the Wii's family gaming pie with their motion-based peripheral devices (albeit the former uses hardware and the latter uses full-body recognition), their offerings may just rival that of Nintendo's groundbreaking platform.

Now this is hands-on gaming

Microsoft's Kinect might just have an advantage over Sony when it comes to this race. The controller-free motion sensor is an add-on designed to complement the existing Xbox 360 console, whose sales year-to-date have generated the biggest share of revenue.

Kinect, formerly known as Project Natal, made its E3 debut against a backdrop of pent-up hype and Cirque-du-Soleil acrobats. (Seriously, Cirque de Soleil put on a show at the press conference.) And using advanced audio and gesture- and face-recognition technology, Kinect enables gamers to engage in peripheral-free gaming, taking complete control of the experience. The voice-control command feature also extends to the rest of the Xbox console.

In terms of family games, Kinect's gesture-recognition technology is revolutionary, says SmackDown's Benadiba, who along with his team is developing family titles for Kinect that will go into retailers next year.

"If you know how to move your body, you can now play Kinect," says Craig Flannagan, group marketing manager for Xbox Canada. Roughly 15 games in total will be launching with the device in early November, including *Dance Central*, a family title developed by Rock Band creator Harmonix that tracks dance move from entertainers like Lady Gaga. The game snagged the Best Original Game nod at the Game Critics Awards this year, as well.

Another debutant generating industry buzz is the simulated pet game *Kinectimals*, developed by UK-based Frontier Developments. The game harnesses Kinect's face-recognition technology by allowing kids to form a relationship with a pet that learns to recognize its owner's features over time. Also worth noting is the plush element of the game, where kids can scan the tags of plush toys via the device's sensor and then interact with the pixelated creature on screen.

Warner Bros. Interactive's *Game Party: In Motion*, developed by California-based FarSight Studios, is also among the first Kinect titles set to hit the market at launch. Aimed at gamers six and up, the final version of the game series will offer 12 mini-games and Facebook integration, allowing players to post their results and avatars on Facebook walls.

Wii games for preschoolers

That doesn't mean publishers are neglecting the Wii. On the kids side, they're pushing applications into younger and younger demos. Along with its Kinect titles, WB Interactive, for example, has bolstered its lineup of family-friendly offerings primarily through the production of the first-ever Sesame Street games for the Wii and DS.

The initial fruit of WB Interactive's multi-year license with Sesame Workshop are *Cookie's Counting Carnival* and *Elmo's A-to-Zoo Adventure*, which will be available in the US this fall. Both games are targeted at the core three-to-five preschool demo and come with

a new Wii-mote cover that masks unnecessary buttons and is designed to be held sideways. (DS Sesame titles come packaged with a bigger Sesame-branded stylus controller to make game play easier for smaller hands.) Additionally, all game instructions are delivered through audio prompts on the Wii and through a simple touch-screen interface on the DS.

Also tied to a multi-year licensing contract is Novata, California-based gaming publisher 2K Play, which holds the exclusive on Nick Jr. properties for console and handheld games. First up is *Nickelodeon Fit* for the Wii, an exclusive preschooler exercise series created by third-party developers High Voltage. The game marks the first fitness title for kids to feature Nick characters, including Dora the Explorer, Diego, Kai-Lan and The Backyardigans. The title's 30 different fitness games, played either using the Wii-mote or the Wii balance board accessory, are designed for three- to seven-year-olds. The game also includes a bonus feature that measures kid activity and allows parents to monitor their children's progress.

Christina Recchio, director of marketing for 2K Play, says that aside from the Wii, the 3DS in particular offers a natural fit for her company's family-friendly portfolio of games. "There's no way we can't address the platform," she says of the handheld device. But for now, the attention is focused on the exclusive Nick gaming license, which has also fathered two new DS titles—*Dora's Birthday Adventure* and *Dora's Cooking Club*, which incorporates math, coloring and matching.

While new licensed opportunities cropping up within its *Fit* segment only help to strengthen the Wii as a forerunner in the casual gaming sector, the console is also making a move towards next-generation gaming with titles like *Epic Mickey*. The Wii exclusive, set to launch this fall, is the brainchild of Warren Spector's Texas-based Junction Point and published by Disney Interactive Studios. The game takes Mickey Mouse on a journey through Wasteland, a new and darker world inspired by vintage Disney characters, including seldom-seen Mickey rival Oswald the Rabbit. It also has an edgier interpretation of the iconic mouse and allows players to "paint" their digital settings and then use "paint thinner" to change the outcome of the game.

Sony down, but not out

As vibrant as the Wii remains, *Children's Technology Review* editor Buckleitner points out the console has a real Achilles heel in its composite graphics, which don't render in HD. With more people buying HD screens, this issue will become increasingly important for Nintendo. In contrast, for Sony, it might be a bit of light at the end of the tunnel. The electronics giant's PlayStation 3 has arguably lost the most in terms of sales and market share since the introduction of the Wii in 2006. And because the PlayStation's graphics remain superior to those of the Nintendo device, coupled with the intro of its new Move motion-control accessory, Sony may just be able to make a stronger play for the family audience.

Pet allows young users to interact with virtual pals on screen.

Sony remains focused on making a mark with the Move and so far has rejected the idea of going after Nintendo's 3DS by turning its PSP portable gaming device into a 3-D platform. But according to Joseph Olin of the Academy of Interactive Arts and Sciences, a California-based organization dedicated to the interactive

The Wii is becoming even more preschool-friendly with the introduction of the first-ever Sesame Street console titles from Warner Bros. Interactive



Essentially, the Move is a glowing orb controller that uses motion sensors and the PlayStation Eye Camera to mimic movement on-screen in Blu-ray powered HD. And the bonus for PlayStation 3 owners with an Eye Camera is that the Move controller costs just US\$49.99 as an add-on.

"A lot of what we showed at E3 goes back to the social game environment," says Matt Levitan, director of marketing and public relations for Sony Canada. He says Sony knows the key to its success includes making games for everyone in the family. At the Move's launch on September 19, one of the first available titles will be *Eye Pet*. Similar to *Kinectimals* and *Nintendogs + Cats*, *Eye*

entertainment community, everyone's working on beefing up their portable gaming offerings to address changing consumer habits that rely on constant connectivity. Given the rising popularity of handheld devices, like smartphones and the iPad, it'll be interesting to see how more app-based games fare over the course of this year and at the next E3 showdown. **N**

LINKS

• 2K Play >	www.2kgames.com/2kplay
• Children's Technology Review >	www.childrenstech.com
• Disney Interactive Studios >	www.buenavistagames.go.com
• Microsoft Xbox >	www.microsoft.com/xbox
• Nintendo >	www.nintendo.com
• SmackDown Productions >	www.smackdownprods.com
• Sony >	www.sony.com
• Warner Bros. Interactive >	www.wbie.com



FIT FOR VIEWING

BY KEVIN RITCHIE **A KIDSCREEN SPONSORED SUPPLEMENT**

Producers of children's television face an interesting existential quandary: Ratings might soar, but so are the statistics around childhood obesity. With study after study warning parents of the adverse side effects budding couch potatoes can experience later in life, it's no surprise that many producers and broadcasters feel a responsibility to use an inherently passive medium to inspire activity.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that kids under age two not watch any TV and warns that older kids watch no more than two hours of quality programming so as not to interfere with physical activity, reading, studying and spending time with friends and family. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 17% of American youth ages two to 19 are obese. In Canada, 61% of adults are overweight, according to a 2010 Statistics Canada study.

In the past year, the childhood obesity epidemic has become a major focus for the American media, thanks in part to Michelle Obama's healthy living campaign "Let's Move." While many US broadcasters have heeded the First Lady's call in the form of public-service commercials and community event sponsorships, only a handful of dietary or fitness-focused programs have found their way to air in recent years.

The reason is twofold. A kids show with longevity, regardless of its theme, must first offer engaging characters, entertaining plot lines and clever writing.

Secondly, animated exercise advice and puppet-led food preparation have traditionally worked best as short, punchy interstitials. Long-format programs based entirely around health and wellness are considered creatively harder to do well, and so broadcasters prefer to weave developmental themes into existing shows alongside a range of other educational plot twists.

"We think it's more effective that way," says PBS Kids SVP Lesli Rotenberg. "So it's not the flavor of the month, but rather something we do day in day out, every week, every month, all year long."

Over the past few years, Rotenberg has entertained more and more pitches for cookery and fitness-focused shows, but has passed partially because the concepts are not in line with the network's "holistic" approach to programming.

While many broadcasters share PBS Kids' philosophy, both public and private, all is not lost for a producer with dreams of fighting fat in long-format.

Two health and wellness shows that have broken through are PBS Sprout's first original long-form series *Noodle and Doodle*, a live-action cookery show aimed at preschoolers, and Halifax Film's fitness-themed animated series *Bo On the Go*, which has secured distribution in most major markets. Both shows have succeeded to air thanks to a combination of clever creative, engaging characters and the strong personal convictions of their creators.

"It's been a personal crusade of mine since the mid-1990s," says Andrew Beecham, SVP of programming at PBS Kids Sprout. "Before I got into television I was a manager at McDonald's, and it was pretty clear how popular fast food was. As soon as I came to this country I immediately put on 25 pounds. That really pushed me into thinking that we needed to do something about this."

Growing up in the United Kingdom, Beecham was obsessed with cooking shows. As an adult and television exec, he's hoping to grow a



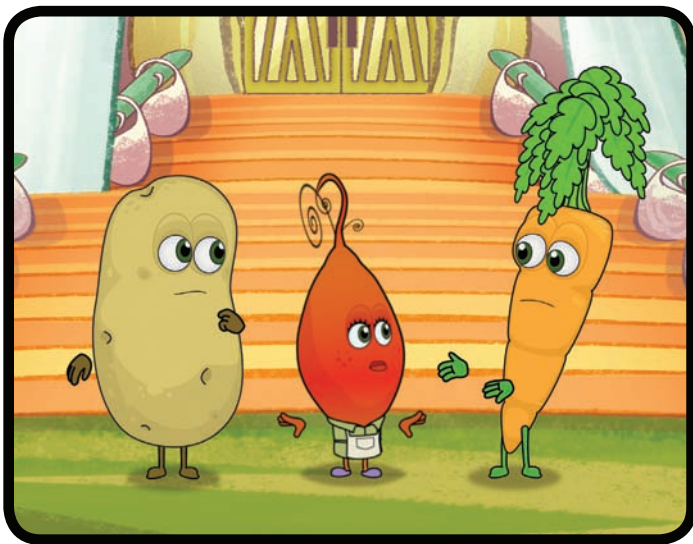
***Noodle and Doodle* is the by-product of former McD's manager Andrew Beecham's personal crusade to fight fat with preschool TV**

new category of cooking programs aimed at preschoolers with *Noodle and Doodle*, a show that draws a parallel between nutrition and arts and crafts. He hopes the series will provide parents with new recipe ideas and instill in its young viewers a love of food. "We describe the show as DIT as opposed to DIY," he says. "Do It Together—that's the Sprout ethos."

Aimed at two- to five-year-olds and their parents, the 26 x half-hour live-actioner will begin airing on Sprout this September. It takes place on a double-decker bus driven by the host Sean, who provides a kind of meals-on-wheels service for preschoolers.

Each episode begins with a video message from a child facing a culinary quandary: Grandpa is coming over for dinner. What to make? Sean proceeds to the bus's second level to meet Noodle, an adorable puppet wearing a colander-shaped hat with spirally-noodle hair peeking out beneath. Together they formulate a menu and drop packaging items down a shoot that are picked up by Doodle, a character who resides in a computer tablet device. While the food is cooling upstairs, Sean proceeds to the lower level and participates in an arts and crafts session with Doodle using the recycled materials.

All of the recipes featured on the show are formulated in consultation with the pediatrics and nutrition experts at Kids Health. Sprout's producers were also careful to include ingredients considered universal so that the show has appeal outside the US.



Funded by a US\$2-million NIH grant, *The Big Adventures of MiniMites* pushes healthy eating habits with Hispanic families

Recipes featured on the show include Meatloaf Bus, a meatloaf smothered in ketchup and decorated to resemble the Noodle and Doodle bus using cucumbers for windows and hard-boiled eggs as wheels; Butterfly Cupcakes, vanilla cupcakes with cream and strawberries; and Popcorn Trail Mix, consisting of popcorn, nuts, dried fruit and oat ring cereal, coated with condensed milk and baked.

"The Food Network and cooking channels have a huge audience of kids," says Beecham. "I think it's a really underserved market and I can't understand for the life of me why it hasn't taken off in this country... We're leading the way in this particular genre, and it's going to be a huge category for us. It will really put Sprout on the map in terms of what we stand for."

Cooking is also a major focus of *The Big Adventures of the MiniMites*, a new animated series that teaches families to talk about nutrition in a healthy way. Developed by LanguageMate, a New York-based organization that teaches non-English-speaking families how to navigate the US health system to access proper care, the program was made possible by a US\$2-million grant from the National Institutes of Health.

The goal of the show is to encourage healthy eating habits and communication skills around nutrition for children ages four to seven and their families. Each episode is 14 minutes in duration and bilingual in English and Spanish.

The stories focus on three children who shrink down to insect size and travel to a healthful land called Yummy Town in order to source the missing ingredient in one of their grandmother's recipes. Along the way they encounter a cast of fruits and vegetables who encourage healthy eating, as well as an antagonistic group of Junk Food Punks.

"The show doesn't just tell kids to eat the dish; It really gives them a good reason why they should eat it," says LanguageMate founder and *MiniMites* creator/executive producer Bill Tan. "The idea comes from my own personal experiences having to take family members to

the hospital and serve as an interpreter to help them communicate and understand health information."

LanguageMate has spent two years developing, testing and doing data analysis in order to meet NIH criteria and provide a comprehensive educational resource for primary school teachers. Part of that testing is a randomized control trial (RCT), a method typically applied to drug trials. A pool of 70 bilingual Latino families have been divided into two groups—a controlled group that has access to the show, and a randomized group that does not. The goal of the study, which wraps up at the end of July, is to compare how well the families talk about nutrition and if they incorporate fruits and veggies into their diets.

"The result has been very encouraging on the intervention side," says Tan. "For educators, the trust factor is going to be enormous. They have to know that the content comes from a trusted source, and being funded by the NIH, I think we have that level of reliability and trustworthiness."

Tan predicts the market for kids cooking shows will be huge. Aside from the rigorous research process, he believes the main challenge creators face in coming up with long-format, health-focused programs is crafting entertaining concepts and characters that drive the narrative.

"In our case the creativity actually flows very well from the health story," he says. "We never had to come up with an interesting story and then find a way to insert the health content. The two components came together very naturally and symbiotically."

Another show that takes a proactive approach is *Bo on the Go*, a half-hour CGI series created and produced by Canada's Halifax Film. It airs on CBC in Canada, CiTV in the UK, Disney in Latin America, Spain and Australia, and on France Télévisions.

Randomized control testing lets LanguageMate assess message impact

Like many creators of children's television, Halifax Film creative directors Jeff Rosen and Cheryl Warner were faced with that age-old existential question: How do you use an inherently sedentary medium to encourage kids to stay physically fit?

The show evolved from a simple formula. The hero, Bo, encourages children at home to participate in a series of action-packed adventures by performing several simple animal-inspired movements dubbed Animoves (hop like a bunny, stomp like an elephant, etc.).

When the audience mimics Bo's moves, they give her added energy to overcome physical obstacles along her journey. Therefore the key to the show's success is its engaging central character. "The thing that makes the series work (children actually do get up and move along with Bo) is

Boon the GO

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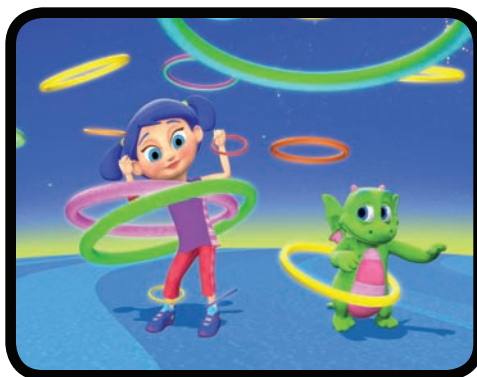


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Halifax Film followed Wii's lead but stayed low-tech enough to bypass parent involvement in the play

Bo on the Go triggers high-stakes audience involvement

the added element of high stakes," explains Rosen. "Our audience cares about Bo because she's super-likable and really needs their help."

The creatives were inspired by the increasing popularity of gesture-based interfaces and gaming systems such as the Nintendo Wii. But unlike the Wii and popular aerobics game *Wii Fit*, Bo doesn't require parental handholding. Rosen calls the series "a low-tech screen-generated way to encourage movement." All of the moves featured in the series were created in collaboration with a variety of movement and childhood learning professionals.

"The challenge is that preschool is a crowded marketplace, so you really need a hook. This genre is something that's going to really work on an entertainment level first and foremost," says Decode SVP of distribution

Josh Scherba, who sells Bo globally. "It's a physical activity series that gets kids up off the couch, and it's essentially tied to the narrative."

Though the series does not yet have US distribution, Scherba says the company is in talks with both American broadcasters and non-profit organizations interested in using Bo as a spokesperson for their programs.

Like the execs at PBS Kids, Kim Wilson, creative head of children's and youth programming at the CBC, populates programming blocks with interstitials focused solely on healthy-living content and looks to buy long-form programs that can incorporate a variety of themes and topics.

However, she decided to pick up *Bo on the Go* three years ago because of its innovative approach. "It's not just about 'go off and do it,'" she says. "You're actually doing physical exercise while you're watching the show, and I thought that was quite a good hook."

Six years ago, Cartoon Network began pushing healthy lifestyle themes through a series of PSA campaigns designed to encourage physical exercise and balanced diets among children.

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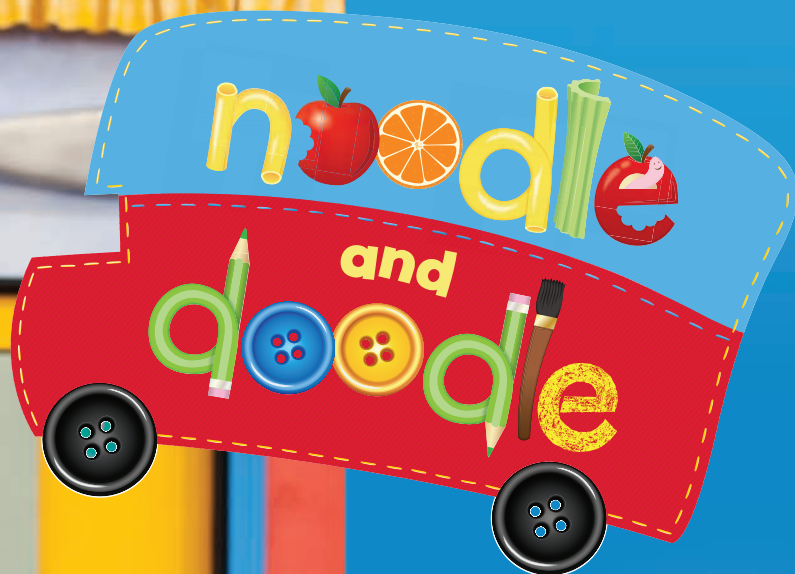
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Cartoon Network and PBS Kids have found the web to be another effective platform for health & wellness content

Its kick-off "Rescuing Recess" program focused on cutbacks to recess in elementary and middle schools, and was followed by the creation of in-house guidelines in partnership with nutrition experts at the University of California Berkeley and The American Dietetic Association to determine what kinds of products and foods the network would associate its original characters with.

"Rescuing Recess" evolved into "Get Animated," an ongoing campaign against childhood obesity through promotion of daily recess, education and active after-school involvement that features PSAs and a tour of community events and schools. This fall the campaign will expand further with an anti-bullying component.

But what about Cartoon Network programming? The channel's VP of social responsibility, Alice Cahn, works with creative teams on new properties and shows that feature situations and teachable moments centered on its healthy lifestyle focus.

"The goal of any entertainment network is to look for characters within those series that kids identify with," she explains, "and then look for opportunities to use those characters with storylines, sets and props to get your messages across."

This year, Cahn has started working with creative teams in Burbank and the UK to ensure the network's social responsibility projects are reflected in settings and in storylines. "I'm respectful of that fact that we need to provide entertaining content for kids," she says. "I'm also really respectful of the fact that we provide entertainment for a still vulnerable audience of children, and it's been a great exchange back and forth."

The internet is another platform kidnets are using to push healthy living themes. Last November, PBS Kids GO! began rolling out a 40-week-long interactive cooking series called *Fizzy's Lunch Lab*. The web-only show is a mix of live action and animated shorts and interactive games that teach kids to prepare healthy snacks and better understand what happens in their bodies when they eat certain foods.

PBS's Rotenberg calls the series an experiment that has proven popular among its demo of six- to nine-year-olds. This fall, the pubcaster will start airing some of the content as interstitials, representing a reversal of the TV-to-internet route that content tends to travel.

Created by Dave Schlafman and Evan Sussman of CloudKid, *Fizzy's Lunch Lab* attracted Rotenberg with its relatable characters and innovative ways of explaining biology. The show was developed with health and education advisors Dr. Craig Sussman and Dr. Sharon Shield, as well as cookbook writer Sally Sampson.

"We're not tied to a 30-minute show," she says. "We can experiment with the form because of the shorter format and our ability to do a lot of interactive components online."

Whether they're weaving health and wellness content into plotlines, buying long-format programs or experimenting on the web, there's one commonality all networks share: The desire to not be seen as bandwagon-jumpers.

For a producer hoping to sell a fitness or cooking show, that means thinking proactively about the developmental issues facing children, rather than reacting to a new obesity statistic in a newspaper or a national campaign such as "Let's Move."

"Obviously the Michelle Obama initiative is absolutely huge," says Sprout's Andrew Beecham. "But *Noodle and Doodle* has been in development since we launched Sprout. It's something I've been talking about and waiting until we had the sufficient planning and funds in place to create."

Still, as the issue remains in the spotlight, producers are going to continue to pitch fitness and cooking shows at networks. The key for creatives and writers will be to develop narratives and characters that drive and sustain the message for 10, 20 or 30 minutes at a time, rather than condescend to preschool viewers.

"You want to be pitched something that you are compelled to do because it's such a great idea," says CBC's Wilson. "Something you can make work and build a brand around. Regardless of what the theme is, you're looking for a great idea." 

Great ideas still trump trendy themes, says the CBC's Kim Wilson, who picked up *Bo* on the Go in Canada



On the move



Ricardo Crespo



Rita Ferro



Marlene Sharp



Alison Stewart

CBeebies (London, England, 44-208-743-8000): Preschool producer **Alison Stewart** has been tapped to head up production, animation and acquisitions for CBeebies, replacing Kay Benbow who is now controller of the channel brand. Like Benbow, Stewart will be leading her team from Salford Quays when BBC Children's makes its move next year. Stewart is shifting from her current role as executive editor for CBeebies where she led in-house development in all aspects of production. Commissions include *ZingZillas*, which is the first collaboration between in-house production and BBC Worldwide. Stewart started at the Beeb as a dresser in the costume department on a three-month contract. Those three months turned into 15 years, as she moved into the production sector. She left the BBC in 1996 to work as a producer, director and scriptwriter in the independent sector and later returned to the mother-ship in 2007.

Rubicon (Los Angeles, California, 818-715-7179): Rubicon Studios has appointed **Marlene Sharp** to the newly created director of development position. She will be responsible for finding IPs for the studio to develop across all platforms, along with seeking out production and co-production partners for new and existing properties. She joins the company from Two Twigs & A Berry Productions, where she worked as co-CEO/producer. Prior to Two Twigs, Sharp was producer/manager of distribution and marketing at Enemes, a South Korean company with offices in LA.

Saban Brands (Los Angeles, California, 310-557-5151): The recently formed subsidiary of Saban Capital has added two key execs to its consumer products team. **Nina Leong** joins as SVP of licensing, while **Kirk Bloomgarden** will take the reins for efforts outside the US as SVP of international licensing. Coming off an 11-year stint at Disney Consumer Products, and serving as EVP of consumer products for The Firm, Leong brings more than 20 years of business development experience to her new role. She will be responsible for overseeing all current licensed products and programs, as well as developing partnerships with new licensees on behalf of the company's properties. Most recently an EVP at Cookie Jar Entertainment and one of the founders of international licensing agency CPLG, Bloomgarden brings decades of experience to overseeing the expansion of Saban's business beyond US borders.

Twentieth Century Fox (Los Angeles, California, 310-369-1000): Fox has restructured its licensing division, which now boasts a new name and a reconfigured executive team. Twentieth Century Fox Consumer Products, as it's been dubbed, will focus on long-term brand-building and the immediate growth of international businesses

through consumer products, retail partnerships and licensing initiatives. Former HIT Entertainment exec **Pam Kunick-Cohen** has been tapped as SVP of global brand management to lead the new team. Kunick-Cohen, who returns to Fox where she was once SVP in the home entertainment division, will determine long-term franchise opportunities both domestically and globally. As the new SVP of global creative, **Ricardo Crespo** is charged with translating Fox's portfolio of TV and film properties into new products. Crespo hails from Mattel, where he last served as worldwide executive group creative director. And the newly appointed global category management team includes SVP of new media **Gary Rosenfeld**, who will continue overseeing Fox's video game projects and managing the division's games development staff. **Lora Cohn**, meanwhile, will serve as VP of toys & social expressions, and **Virginia King** is now VP of fashion & home. As Fox Consumer Products sets its sights on expanding global sales, three teams have been set up to cover four regions. To that end, **Kevin Sherwood** has been appointed VP of North America sales. Sherwood comes from the Fox Home Entertainment division, where he spent the last five years as executive director of retail marketing. To lead efforts in Asia Pacific & Latin America, **Bob Bacon** has been named VP. They join **Carl Lumbard**, currently SVP and MD for EMEA.

The Walt Disney Company (Los Angeles, California, 818-560-3173): **Rita Ferro** has been promoted to EVP of Disney Media Sales and Marketing, succeeding Tricia Wilber, who was recently named CFO for The Walt Disney Company EMEA. In assuming her new role, Ferro will relocate to New York from Miami, where she's been a part of Disney and ESPN's Latin American business since 1997. Ferro will lead the integrated sales team that represents and maximizes advertising sales, marketing and promotions across Disney's media platforms serving kids, moms and families, including Disney Channel, Disney XD, Playhouse Disney (soon to be rebranded Disney Junior), plus more than 20 online properties. Ferro has been VP of advertising sales at Disneymedia+ since 2008.

Warner Bros. Consumer Products (London, England, 44-207-984-6100): WBCP has promoted **Pilar Zulueta** to EVP and GM for EMEA, charging her with managing licensing and retail business development activities. Zulueta will continue working with licensees, retailers and promotional partners to oversee regional sales and marketing initiatives related to key consumer products categories including toys, apparel and accessories, housewares, promotions and publishing. Zulueta joined WBCP in 1997 as GM of operations in Spain and Portugal, was promoted to VP and GM of Southern Europe, and then moved up to SVP in 2002.

The Little Airplane Academy	Aug. 14-16	New York, NY	212-965-8999	www.littleairplane.com	TV/Prod
New York International Gift Fair	Aug. 14-19	New York, NY	914-421-3344	www.nyigf.com	Lic/Mfg
MAGIC Marketplace	Aug. 17-19	Las Vegas, NV	818-593-5000	www.magiconline.com	Lic/App
International Digital Content Conference	Aug. 17-19	Seoul, Korea	82-2-2016-4077	www.aicit.org/idc	TV/Prod/Prog/Dist
LA Office RoadShow	Sep. 13-15	Los Angeles, CA	310-275-2088	www.laoffice.com/roadshow	Film/TV/Mktg
Cartoon Forum	Sep. 14-17	Sopron, Hungary	32-2-242-9343	www.cartoon-media.be	Anim/TV
Brand Licensing Europe	Sep. 29-30	London, England	44-208-956-2661	www.brandlicensing.eu	Lic/Merch
MIPCOM Junior	Oct. 2-3	Cannes, France	33-1-4190-4400	www.mipcomjunior.com	TV/Prod/Prog/Dist
MIPCOM	Oct. 4-8	Cannes, France	33-1-4190-4400	www.mipcom.com	TV/Prod/Prog/Dist
Fall Toy Preview	Oct. 5-8	Dallas, TX	212-675-1141	www.toyassociation.org	Toys/Games
Frankfurt Book Fair	Oct. 6-10	Frankfurt, Germany	49-69-210-2256	www.book-fair.com	Publishing
New York Comic-Con	Oct. 8-10	New York, NY	203-840-5321	www.newyorkcomiccon.com	Publishing
ABC Kids Show	Oct. 10-13	Las Vegas, NV	210-691-4848	www.theabcshow.com	Toys
China Toy Expo	Oct. 12-14	Shanghai, China	86-660-38-881-217	www.china-toy-expo.com	Toys/Merch
Ottawa International Animation Festival	Oct. 20-24	Ottawa, Canada	613-232-8769	www.ottawa.awn.com	Anim/TV
Cinekid Festival	Oct. 20-29	Amsterdam, The Netherlands	31-20-531-7890	www.cinekid.nl	Film
American Film Market	Nov. 3-10	Los Angeles, CA	310-446-1000	www.ifta-online.org	Film
SPAA Conference	Nov. 16-19	Sydney, Australia	61-2-9360-8988	www.spaa.org.au	TV/Prod/Prog/Dist
Toy and Game Inventor Fair	Nov. 18-19	Chicago, IL	847-677-8277	www.toyandgameinventors.com	Toys/Games
Chicago Toy and Game Fair	Nov. 20-21	Chicago, IL	847-677-8277	www.chitag.com	Toys/Games
Média-Jeunes	Nov. 18-19	Montreal, Canada	514-597-6809	www.act-aet.tv	Prod/Dist
Cartoon Feature	Nov. 22-24	Munich, Germany	322-242-9353 (Belgium)	www.cartoon-media.be	Film/Anim
Dubai World Game Expo	Nov. 29-Dec. 1	Dubai, UAE	971-4362-4717	www.gameexpo.ae	Inter/Games
Dubai International Character & Licensing Fair	Nov. 29-Dec. 1	Dubai, UAE	971-4362-4717	www.character.ae	Lic/Merch
Asia Television Forum	Dec. 8-10	Singapore	65-6780-4697	www.asiatvforum.com	TV/Prod/Prog/Dist
Consumer Electronics Show	Jan. 6-9	Las Vegas, NV	301-631-3983	www.cesweb.org	Inter/Merch
Retail's BIG Show	Jan. 9-12	New York, NY	708-486-0725	www.nrf.com/annual11	Merchandising
Hong Kong International Licensing Show	Jan. 10-12	Hong Kong	852-183-0668	www.hklicensingshow.com	Lic/Merch
Hong Kong Toys & Games Fair	Jan. 10-13	Hong Kong	852-2240-4435	www.hktoysfair.hktdc.com	Toys
NATPE	Jan. 24-26	Miami, FL	310-453-4440	www.natpe.org	TV/Prod/Prog/Dist
The Toy Fair	Jan. 25-27	London, England	44-207-701-7127	www.toyfair.co.uk	Toys
Nuremberg Toy Fair	Feb. 3-8	Nuremberg, Germany	49-91-1998-1316	www.nurembergtoyfair.com	Toys
Toy Fair	Feb. 13-16	New York, NY	212-675-1141	www.toyassociation.org	Toys/Games
KidScreen Summit	Feb. 15-18	New York, NY	416-408-2300	www.kidscreensummit.com	EVERYTHING KIDS!
Game Developers Conference	Feb. 28-Mar. 4	San Francisco, CA	415-947-6000	www.gdconf.com	Inter/Games
Cartoons on the Bay	Mar. 17-20	Portofino, Italy	39-06-37-498-315	www.cartoonsbay.com	Anim/TV
Bologna Children's Book Fair	Mar. 28-30	Bologna, Italy	39-051-282-111	www.bookfair.bolognafiere.it	Pub/Lic
MIPTV	Apr. 4-8	Cannes, France	33-1-4190-4400	www.miptv.com	TV/Prod/Prog/Dist
London Book Fair	Apr. 11-13	London, England	44-208-271-2124	www.londonbookfair.co.uk	Publishing
Annecy	June 6-11	Annecy, France	33-4-5010-0900	www.annecy.org	Animation
E3 Expo 2011	June 7-9	Los Angeles, CA	805-654-0171	www.e3expo.com	Inter/Games
Licensing International Expo	June 14-16	Las Vegas, NV	203-882-1300	www.licensingexpo.com	Lic/Merch
DISCOP East	June 21-23	Budapest, Hungary	33-1-4229-3224 (France)	www.discop.com	TV/Prod/Prog/Dist

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Toys-T
TV-TV



An epic ball of yarn

The latest installment of Nintendo's Kirby franchise sees the pink video game character making his long-awaited comeback—and he's chock-full of string. In *Kirby's Epic Yarn*, the iconic blob is set against an environment comprised completely of items made from different patterns and textiles. Players use Kirby's own string to progress, making for a crafty alternative to ordinary superpowers.



A new chapter in 3-D

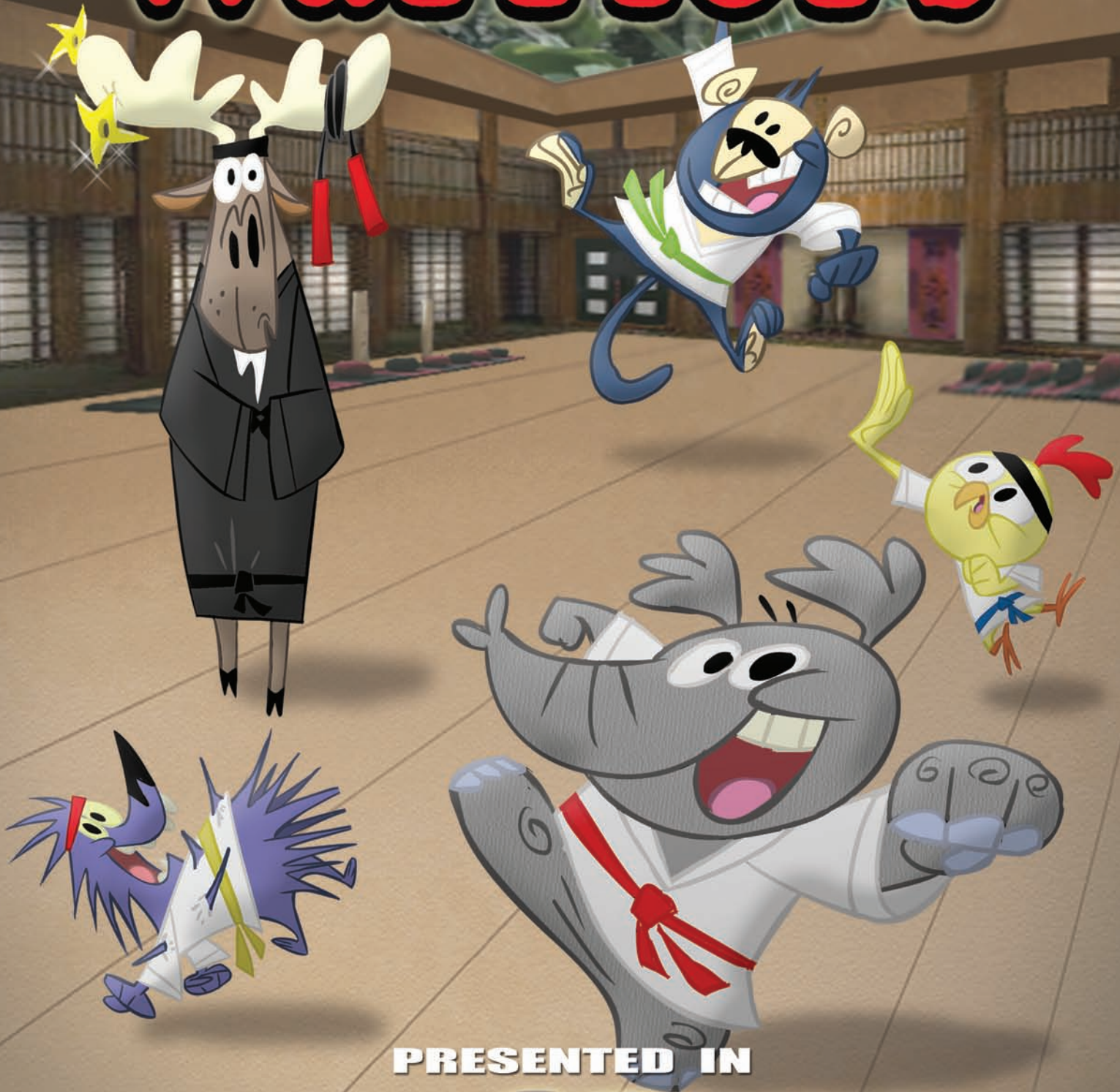
Have the sudden urge to create your own 3-D graphics? New digital storytelling tool ZooBurst lets kids do just that by allowing anyone with a web browser and Flash plugin to create customized 3-D pop-up books. The completely web-based service allows users to write, illustrate and share 3-D books powered by augmented reality tech that's viewable through computer webcams.



Funky monkey

Santa Monica, California-based Red Hot Rocket Design made its debut at this year's Licensing Show in Las Vegas, raising more than a few eyebrows. Graphic artists Julian Koiles and Ryan Hungerford showed off design-forward IP like Spunky Monkey (left). The company is interested in finding licensing partners in the stationery and apparel categories. This is likely not the last you've seen of Spunky.

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